DECEMBER, 1900.

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Vol. IV. No. 21.

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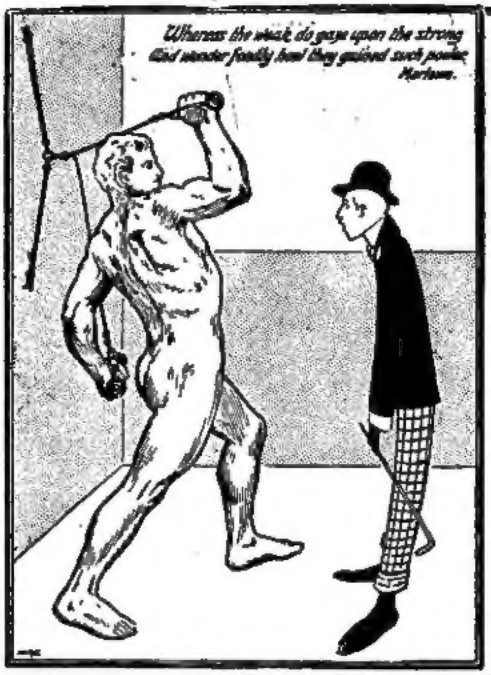

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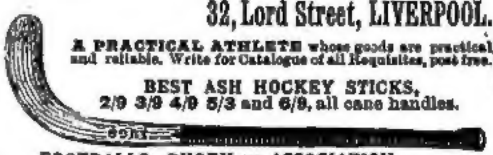

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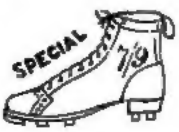

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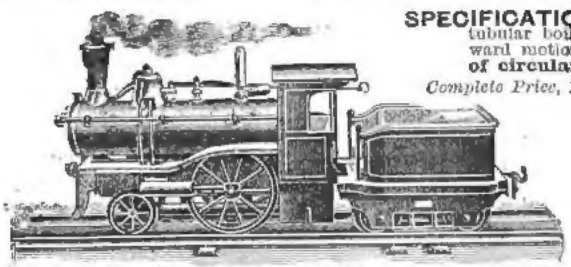

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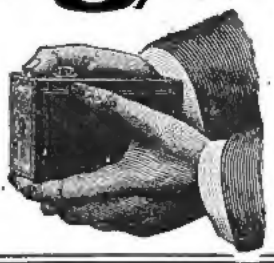

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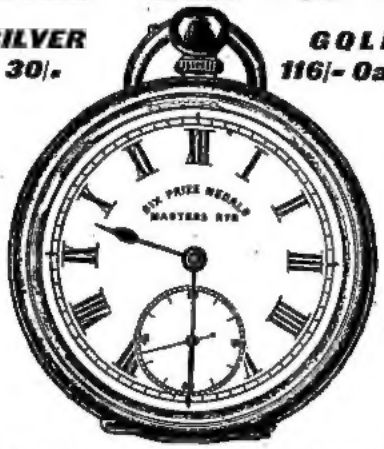

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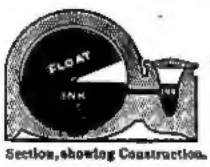

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THE CAPTAIN.

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DECEMBER, 1900.

			Cycle Lamps to be Lighted.
1.	*Saturday* ...	*H.R.H. the Princess of Wales born*, 1844 ...	4.54
2.	**Sunday** ...	*First in Advent*	4.53
3.	*Monday* ...	*Battle of Hohenlinden*, 1800	4.52
4.	*Tuesday* ...	*Thomas Carlyle born*, 1795	4.52
5.	*Wednesday*...	*Sir J. Bridge, organist, b.* 1844	4.52
6.	*Thursday* ...	*Anthony Trollope, novelist, d.* 1883 ...	4.51
7.	*Friday* ...	*General Sir Redvers Buller, V.C., b.* 1839...	4.51
8.	*Saturday* ...	*Q. Horatius Flaccus born*, 65 *B.C.*... ...	4.50
9	**Sunday** ...	*Second in Advent*	4.50
10.	*Monday* ...	*Battle of Magersfontein*, 1899 .. .	4.50
11.	*Tuesday* ...	*Richard Doyle died*, 1883	4.49
12.	*Wednesday*...	*Fall of Plevna*, 1877	4.49
13.	*Thursday* ...	*Dr. Johnson died*, 1784	4.49
14.	*Friday* ...	*Prince Consort died*, 1861	4.49
15.	*Saturday* ...	*Izaak Walton died*, 1683	4.49
16.	**Sunday** ...	*Third in Advent*	4.49
17.	*Monday* ...	*Oxford Term ends*	4.49
18.	*Tuesday* ...	*Slavery abolished in the U.S.A.*, 1862 . .	4.50
19.	*Wednesday*...	*Cambridge Term ends*	4.50
20.	*Thursday* ...	*Battle of Suakin*, 1888	4.51
21.	**Friday** ...	*St. Thomas' Day*	4.51
22.	**SATURDAY**	**JANUARY "CAPTAIN" PUBLISHED**	**4.52**
23.	**Sunday** ...	*Fourth in Advent*	4.52
24.	*Monday* ...	*Christmas Eve*	4.53
25.	*Tuesday* ...	*Christmas Day*	4.53
26.	**Wednesday**	*St. Stephen's Day*	4.54
27	**Thursday**...	*St. John's (Apostle and Evangelist) Day* ...	4.55
28.	*Friday* ...	*Innocents' Day*	4.56
29.	*Saturday* ...	*Canton captured*, 1857	4.57
30.	**Sunday** ...	*First after Christmas*	4.58
31.	*Monday* ...	*Nineteenth Century ends*	4.58

Calendar Events for February are Invited.

THERE WERE THREE BOLTS TO SHOOT AND A BAULK OF TIMBER TO DROP INTO ITS SOCKET, AND AS I ACCOMPLISHED THIS WITH FEVERISH HASTE THE *RIAŠ* BEHIND ME WAS TERRIFIC.—*(See page 109.)*

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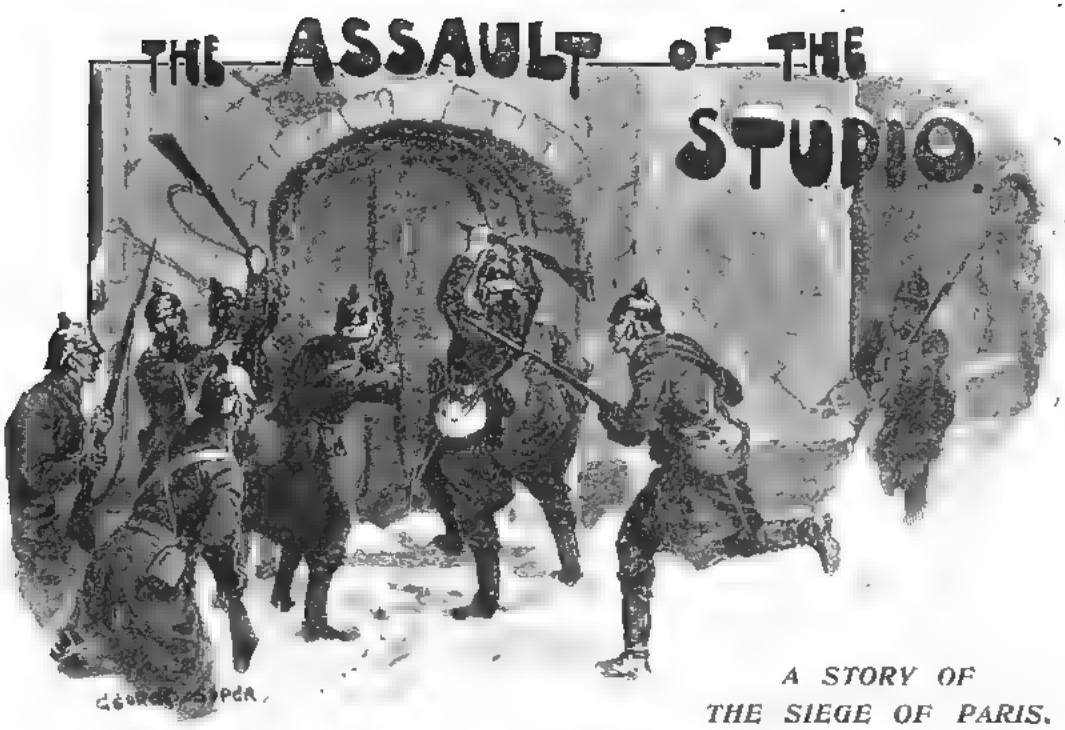

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By D. H. Parry,

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Illustrated by George Soper.

STRANGE VISITORS.

"HUSH, my friend!" said Arrentièrre, in a low voice. "I am listening!"

It must have been about ten o'clock, for we were working late, Arrentièrre and I.

We worked late all through that siege, because, in the first place, there was so much of interest going on around one in the daytime that one had to make up for it when one should have been abed; and secondly, we had both drifted into the absolutely false idea that our inspirations flowed best when the lamps were lighted in the studio, and the charcoal stove was glowing redly in the corner.

Arrentièrre was rolling one of his interminable cigarettes, and presently, getting down from his stool, he went over to the stove, and stood there so long in silence that I looked at him.

"What's the matter, old chap?" said I; but he raised his hand, and did not put it down again.

Then it was that he answered, in his calm, low voice: "Hush, my friend, I am listening!"

He was always a quiet, deliberate fellow, my painter chum, but there was something in his tone, and in his face, as he stood there, that made me slide the sheaf of brushes into the thumbhole of my palette, and sit listening too.

Everything was as silent as the grave, except for the occasional grumbling boom of a distant gun on the other side of Paris, where the Prussians where shelling the forts in an aimless manner that we had grown accustomed to.

All else was absolutely still, and if you could have peeped through the curtain, and rubbed the frost off the window, you would have understood why.

Snow muffled the little street, and did its wintry best to hide the shell-hole in the restaurant over the way, and the ruins of the post-house to the left there.

It had covered up an irregular row of objects under the orchard wall beyond the plough land—covered them tenderly with its winding sheet, which was all the burial those seven dead Moblots got until the thaw came, and we had almost forgotten them, for they had been there a week!

Away behind us lay the loop of the river, with the Bois beyond it, and farther away, the beleaguered city; on the other side, little more than a mile and a half, as one looked from the studio door, were the woods of St. Cloud, and in those woods lay the Prussians. And the manner of our coming to that place was this.

A month before, Arrentièrre had come to me in my lodging at Montmartre, and, perching on the edge of my bed, had said: "*Mon ami*, in a very little while you will have to go on short rations; you will be cooped up where you can know nothing, while at my place over yonder, beneath *Valérien*, I have victualled for a veritable siege, and everything is as safe as a church. Come, we shall be good comrades, and you will see what you will see."

The offer was very tempting; at that time the ring of iron had not drawn so close to the city, and as for the danger—when one is young one does not think of that.

So there we had taken up our quarters, disturbed only by an occasional patrol, and protected, as we hoped, from the enemy's guns by the great hill on whose summit was the fort which sometimes played on the besiegers, but more often remained ominously silent, reserving itself for a later day.

The studio was one of six, forming a small colony at one end of the street, and clustering round a yard, which had a grass plot in the centre, and two plaster statues of Tragedy and Comedy—failures of Gensonné's, the sculptor, who had placed them there when the Salon declined them.

Gensonné had gone; Descarolle, who painted those wonderful twilights you have all seen, had gone also; the rest of our brother artists departed after a few shells fell in the street outside, leaving us alone, with the exception of Barotte, who did not count, being a silent, morose fellow, given to *absinthe*.

It may have been foolish to linger there, in spite of the passes which Arrentièrre had obtained from General Trochu; successive captains of the line, and officers of the Mobiles, who visited us in our solitude, remonstrated with us, but we were firm.

We lived in hopes that one day a great fight would take place in our vicinity; as for the loneliness, we did not mind it in the least, and were rather glad than otherwise when the last inhabitant of the village retired with his household goods and left us to our fate.

The departure of that last inhabitant, and the coming of the snow, was why a silence as of the tomb lay over everything outside, when Arrentièrre stood listening, and I vainly trying to discover what it was he heard.

"There it is again," he muttered, sidling on tip-toe towards the window, "don't you hear it now?"

"Hear what?" I whispered, rather irritated.

He glanced at me with a faint twinkle of amusement in his dark eyes, and said: "Someone running on the frozen road; one man, I think, and behind him several, and before that there was a single shot from a rifle, a long way off!"

Arrentièrre had quick ears.

As for myself, I could perceive nothing but that sense of ice-bound hush peculiar to the winter night, and sometimes a little grating hiss as the rising wind, blowing from the direction of St. Cloud, whisked some particles against our window. Once there was a muffled crash not far off, that made us both start.

"'Tis some more of poor Guimard's *établissement* coming down with a run," said Arrentièrre, after a pause; but he was wrong.

I had crept back, still under the hair-raising influence of the situation, to place some more charcoal on the stove, when—suddenly the crash was repeated outside our door, followed by a dull thud against the panel.

I stopped, looking over my shoulder, and I could imagine that I turned white; Arrentièrre peered through the hole we had bored through the shutter of the big window.

"Ha!" said he, quickly, "it is that drunken Barotte; he is lying all in a heap out there," and he glanced at me as if to say, "What shall we do—shall we let him in?"

"He will freeze to death," said I. "It would be only the kind thing to carry him to bed, and see that his fire is burning."

Arrentièrre had not waited for me to finish, but was already unfastening the complicated system of bolt and barricade we had devised for the entrance; and when it was flung open, with the bright glare of our lamps shining on to the snow, we saw that there was more than the *absinteur* before us, and that our romance was only just beginning!

Barotte was on his side, with one arm stretched out towards us; it was the knuckles of that hand that had struck the door, and a curious dabble of blood stained the white ground beside him, trailing away into the darkness, in gruesome pattern of clots.

"Quick," said Barotte feebly, turning his wild eyes up at us, "I am wounded, and I am pursued!"

* * * * *

We sat him on a chair before the stove, and washed his hurts with warm water, after carefully barring the door again.

A bullet from a needle gun had ploughed his thigh, making it bleed profusely, and in his efforts to escape he had fallen several times, tearing his hands badly. He had prowled too near to the Prussian lines, searching for potatoes in the fields on the ridge, and they had fired at him for a spy; they followed him to the other end of the village, but he had dodged them, and they were even then searching the tannery.

So said Barotte, still panting, and very pale, and he told his story in a shame-faced, hesitating manner, like a man who has sacrificed his birth-

"QUICK!" SAID BAROTTE, FEEBLY; "I AM WOUNDED, AND I AM PURSUED!"

right on the shrine of intemperance, and knows it.

I, young in those days, was filled with a vague pity for him; Arrentièrre, who was older and more experienced, said nothing, but went to the peep-hole in the shutter, and peered out into the darkness; and once or twice I saw him looking curiously at Barotte, which would have puzzled me, had one had time to puzzle about anything but the Prussians, and the probability of a visit from them.

Arrentièrre came away from the window after a while, and we bound up Barotte's leg as well as we could with some strips of an old blouse.

"I think they have given you up, monsieur," said Arrentièrre, rolling a cigarette. "After this adventure, I would give the Prussian lines a wide berth if I were you."

I distinctly saw Barotte change colour, and wince as if in pain, which I have no doubt he was, and his restless, furtive eyes sought Arrentièrre's face for a moment, with keen questioning in them.

I believe he was about to speak, but there happened an interruption at the instant which startled us all. Three sharp raps were delivered on the outer door, and Arrentièrre and I ran to the shutter.

"Bah!" laughed Arrentièrre the next moment, "We are becoming nervous; it is our friends the Moblots come to smoke a pipe with us; you have nothing to fear, Monsieur Barotte."

But Barotte was mounting the wooden ladder that led to the gallery with surprising agility, and had already gained the top.

"They are friends from the outposts," repeated my brother artist, a little scornfully, as he walked towards the door, but Barotte apparently did not hear him, and, limping along the gallery, disappeared into our sleeping chamber.

"Let him stay there," said I. "He is horribly shattered, and does not wish to be seen."

Arrentièrre flung the outer door open with a hasty ejaculation of contempt, and two strange figures strode in, bringing such a draught of cold air and such a gay burst of greeting with them, that the victim of *absinthe* was forgotten for the nonce.

"Ha, we have arrived ourselves," cried the Lieutenant Roucou, stamping the snow from his brown knee boots, and shaking me by the hand. "I do not marvel at you, my English friend, that you delight to hibernate in this *atelier* of Elysium; *peste*, my grandfather's vault in Père-la-Chaise is warmer than the outpost to-night."

A good-looking fellow, Roucou, with light curly hair and a winning smile; when I saw him afterwards at Montretout, when the guns had gone over him, the smile was still there—and I shed tears.

His comrade, Patinot was Arrentièrre's

brother-in-law, and an architect of promise when the war broke out; he had distinguished himself at Champigny a few days before, and his left hand was tied in a bandage, which necessitated his cigarettes being rolled for him.

Then, such an unwinding of mufflers, and drawing of numbed fingers from woollen gloves, and a great monopolization of the stove by the two Moblot officers, who would have sat upon it if it had not glowed so ominously crimson.

Twice every week, when their battalion took the outposts on our side, they stole over to us for an hour, and at the end of that time a sergeant would come and tap on the door for them, and a little glass of cognac would send him away quite happy in their wake.

It was a thing to be looked forward to after the mud and the misery; and a memory my friend and I recall when we meet—but always with a sadness now.

That night was to be unique in the history of the studio; and that is why I no longer care for the snow time!

Arrentièrre looked up suddenly.

He was sprawling on all fours in one corner, groping under the boards into one of his secret *cachets* where the wine was hidden, and, as if the thing had only just recurred to him, he said: "By the way, do you know we have got the Prussians in the village to-night?"

Roucou and Patinot sprang erect and stared at him.

"Bah, *mon ami!*" laughed Roucou, "the thing is not possible, you make game of us."

At that very moment it was that the sharp tap came on the outer door, and Patinot exclaimed, "No, there is something in it; the sergeant is here already."

Then we all looked grave, and I, being the nearest, withdrew the bolts.

It happened in an instant, and for the life of me I cannot tell you who was the most surprised, the German officer in the big boots, who stalked boldly in, crushing me unceremoniously between the door and the wall, or we four inside there, taken completely off our guard.

"Ha!" cried the intruder, falling back a pace, though he was a brave man for all that, "French officers, and in uniform! You will surrender, for you are surrounded."

"Shut the door, but don't fire for your lives," said Arrentièrre, who was still kneeling, with a bottle of Chambertin in each hand, and as I obeyed I saw, over my shoulder, Patinot and Roucou jump at the man like wolves!

There were three bolts to shoot and a baulk of timber to drop into its socket, and as I accomplished this with feverish haste the *rixe* behind me was terrific.

When at last I was free to help, they had got him down on the model-throne, and were shouting for a rope; and the interior of the great room was a sight to behold, for he was strong as Hercules—that Prussian.

Spent with his struggles, we eventually bound his ankles tightly, and had just pinioned his brawny arms, when a strange interruption took place.

The door of the bedchamber which led on to the gallery overhead was violently opened, and a deep voice called excitedly down to us, "Out with the lights—the yard is full of Prussians!"

It was Barotte, the *absinthe* drinker, who, shut up in the room, oblivious of the capture we had made, now saw the prisoner in the middle of us, and, seeing, grew terribly pale, and clung to the gallery railing, his face working curiously, his eyes staring at the officer, who, in his turn, looked up at him.

The Frenchman stood in the full glare of the circle of lamps that lit the studio. The German lay prostrate in the shadow near my overturned easel, but over his visage, battered in the fray, there crept a curious, mocking sneer, that was almost a smile of contempt.

Barotte presented a wild, dramatic figure, his hair tangled, his face of the pallor of marble; the rough bandage on his thigh already showing bloodstains that had soaked through it, and, afraid that he would pitch head-first over as he swayed backwards and forwards, I cried, "Take care, Barotte; what is the matter with you?"

"Barotte, you call him?" growled the Prussian officer. "Bah! it is not by that name we have known him at our headquarters. So it is you, spy, that have led us this goose-chase, you pitiful rat!"

Barotte gasped, and quivered like a leaf, and when he found his voice it was to scream in heartrending tones, "Put out the lights, I tell you; the Prussians are in the yard!"

II.

DEATH IN THE DARK.

THE Lieutenant Roucou had stepped forward a pace and was looking up at the drunkard; Patinot's brows met across his nose, which made him appear very fierce; Arrentièrre's eyes sought mine for a moment, and he said in his quiet way, "I thought as much."

Then the Prussian startled us all by bellowing something in German that made the studio ring, which was immediately answered by a thunder of gun-butts on the outer door.

ARMENTEROS LEAPED OUT OF THE SHADOW INTO THE MOONLIGHT—(See Page 201)

"We are in for it now, my friends," said Arrentièrre, who spoke German; "he has told his men to break in at all hazards, but not to fire lest they alarm our outposts. We must now gag this devourer of the sausage of Frankfort and the cheese of Limbourg; his observations had best be confined to these four walls for the present."

"Sacred head of a pig!" exclaimed Patinot, "if the commandant hears of this, we shall regret leaving the outpost to-night. But tell me, Arrentièrre, will your door stand?"

"Stand! *oui*, it is almost shell-proof," and as he spoke he threw a twisted shawl over the Prussian's head, knotting it tightly behind his neck, so that the poor man could only breathe through his nose and look out of his left eye, "There is only one vulnerable place, Patinot, unless they use pickaxes, that is the big skylight, and to reach it they must get on the roof."

Meanwhile the Lieutenant Roucou had never taken his eyes off Barotte, who still stood up by the railing, his chin sunk on his chest, and when Roucou suddenly addressed him, the lieutenant's voice was so unlike itself that we all looked at him, in spite of the clamour at the door, and the heavy tramping of feet under the end window.

"You are my cousin, Etienne Barotte, then?" said the officer of Mobiles.

"I am your cousin, Emile," replied the livid, miserable man in the gallery.

"It is not true — the thing that Prussian said of you—it cannot be possible?" demanded the lieutenant, making a fine, picturesque figure in his dark pilot coat, with the red-striped, blue pantaloons tucked baggily into his knee-boots.

"It is true, and it is not true," groaned Barotte, desperately, grasping his head in his shaking hands, "it was the *absinthe*. I could not get it, and I could not live without it. I used to visit the enemy's lines, and they filled my bottle, and sometimes they asked me questions. Ah, you do not know what it is to carry that curse with you; to sink so low that the meanest beast of the field is a thing to envy!"

Barotte was a man of nearly forty, Roucou a lad of eighteen, risking his life hourly for his beloved country, which the other had so shamefully betrayed, and the contrast was terrible to witness.

Roucou's face showed the loathing in his soul, and he had already half-drawn the pistol from his belt with an intention there was no mistaking, when Patinot sprang forward and grasped his wrist.

"Not so, my child," said Patinot, sternly; "afterwards, if you will; but if we commence firing those rascals outside will do the same, and that will bring their comrades down to help them. No, listen, I have a plan! Arrentièrre, is there any means of getting into the fields at the back of this?"

"Yes, a window in the bedroom up there, but it is nearly 20ft. from the ground, and the moon is confoundedly bright."

"No matter," said the Moblot, and he looked at Barotte.

"You, *canaille*, attend to what I say. You shall carry a note to the outpost on the road yonder, the chances are a thousand that you will never reach it, but you will try; if you are shot, *ma foi*, you die a better death than you deserve. If you send help in time, you will have done something to purge yourself of your treachery. How say you?"

"I will go!" exclaimed Barotte, throwing out his arms vehemently. "I will go this instant!"

"Not so fast," said the Capitaine Patinot, "you will go when you are told. Quick, Arrentièrre! pencil and paper, and I will reconnoitre in the meantime."

* * * * *

From our peephole in the end window it was possible to see across the yard and out into the street.

The window itself was boarded up on the inside and strongly clamped with iron, so that, although the Prussians promptly shattered the glass, they found there was no getting in that way, and I counted them, talking in council in the moonlight on the snowy path, and there were fifteen, including a red-bearded *feldwebel*, or sergeant.

When three of their number ran off at the double my heart sank; I thought they had gone for a reinforcement, but they were back again directly, dragging a heavy ladder from the ruins of the restaurant, and then I knew that we would have to defend the skylight!

Arrentièrre and Patinot came out on to the gallery as I made this discovery, and when I told them what I had seen, Patinot laughed.

"*Tiens!*" said he, quite gaily, "there are worse things than that; yonder carrion is crawling on his stomach over a ploughed field, and in a quarter of an hour Sergeant Soufflet should have my message—the scoundrel has grovelled so long that he makes remarkable progress after the manner of the serpent, and we dressed him in the Prussian's helmet and a ."

"Pardon me, Patinot," interrupted Arrentièrre, holding up his hand as he came down

into the studio, "we can talk later on; do you hear that?"

The heavy tread of feet mounting the rungs of the ladder was distinctly audible outside.

"Quick! there are weapons in plenty on the walls; choose for yourselves and gain the gallery—for me, I fancy this rapier, it is of the time of 'The Three Mousqueteers,'" he said; "and now I put out the light."

In a moment the *atelier* was plunged in darkness; only the moon streamed down through the slanting window in the roof, and in the corner the stove still glowed redly, like a danger-signal.

The two Moblots and I crouched behind the tapestry that hung over the balustrade, almost on a level with the skylight; we poked rents in the fabric and looked through; Arrentièrre remained below.

Then on the glass, which was dim with the heat of the room, the forms of the Prussians loomed black against the moonlight, like figures in a shadow-pantomime, and it was really a fine study of *silhouettes*, with comical snub noses poked out of the great-coat collars, and the ugly spiked helmets over all. The rifles possibly had less of humour in them!

We could tell which was the sergeant because of his beard, and it was the sergeant who commenced matters by crashing the muzzle of his needle-gun through one of the long glass panes. "What has happened, Herr Captain?" he called; but there was no reply.

The prisoner, in his corner, was tightly gagged, and, moreover, something uncomfortably keen menaced his throat—it was the rapier of the period of "The Three Mousqueteers"!

Again the sergeant's question cleft the silence and the dark, and not a sound made answer, unless it was a fragment of glass broken off by the spike of his *pikelhaube*, which fell with a musical ring on to the stove.

He withdrew his head and gave a gruff command that brought his comrades to their feet like a flock of black crows, and with a sweep of their gun-butts they smashed the skylight to atoms.

"Follow me, men," cried the *feldwebel*, and, lowering himself to the full extent of his right arm, he dropped the 12ft. on to the floor.

Arrentièrre leaped out of the shadow into the moonlight. The rapier of the period of Athos and Porthos passed through the sergeant's lung, and the D'Artagnan of our little garrison said "*One!*"

We three in the gallery instinctively rose, and the sight and sound of us made the Prussians pause for a second's space; all but one, a fair-haired lad, who was very eager and dropped alone.

Before he reached the ground the rapier flashed out again; the boy rolled over like a rabbit, his rifle clashing to the other end of the studio, and Arrentièrre said, "*Two!*"

Then the rest of them came down like an avalanche upon us, bringing a quantity of snow with them to heighten the resemblance.

"Ha!" cried Patinot, as we flung ourselves down the gallery stair, "If one might only fire now!"

There was a fearful chaos of sprawling men in the patch of moonlight underneath the broken skylight. Jump a sheer drop of 12ft. on to a boarded floor and you will know what I mean—try it with a heavy rifle and a great coat and a pouch of ball-cartridge, to say nothing of the short sword on your hip, and the seven-leagued boots of the Prussian soldiery, and you will arrive at a still better understanding.

When I reached the level, Arrentièrre and the two Mobiles were at them with the cold steel, and the floor was slippery with something that was not snow!

But though we had the advantage—for not one of the enemy alighted on his feet—half a dozen recovered themselves instantly, and they were all big fellows.

Nine had jumped, so I concluded that the other six were keeping guard outside; as for the sergeant, he lay up against the stove, and his beard was frizzling.

Even in the heat of it all I had kept rather aloof, for I was an Englishman and had no manner of right to be killing Prussians; but neither, for the matter of that, had they any right to be killing me, and when a burly Pomeranian sprang forward and made a furious lunge, I stepped aside, and smote him with the naval cutlass I carried, and he reeled up against Patintot, who finished him.

Arrentièrre gave a loud yell, and we saw that he was in difficulties.

The Prussian officer had managed to get his head clear from the shawl, and seized my friend with his teeth by the calf of his leg; but Roucou freed him very effectually, and the Prussian officer coughed for ten minutes before he died.

Alphonse de Neuville would have given something to have seen that studio, with the dramatic carnage in every corner; for myself, I could sometimes wish I had never seen it at all.

There was now only one Prussian left, and though Patinot cried, "*Rendez vous*," and lowered his sword, the man darted up into the gallery, maddened out of his wits.

"*Ma foi*, we have done well!" said Arrentièrre grimly. "Shall we open the door and clear the yard of those others?"

"HE IS DEAD, THEN?" SAID PATINOT, WITH A QUICK GLANCE AT HIS COMPANION, ROUCOU.

"Hark! there is no need," replied Patinot, who was bleeding very badly, and outside we heard a volley of chassepots, and a babel of French and German.

Sergeant Soufflet had arrived with the Moblots from the outpost!

* * * * *

We watched them from the porch; it was very fine.

The snow on the ground, and on the gabled roofs of the other studios; the statues of Tragedy and Comedy shivering in the moonlight; and against the pedestal of the latter a dying Moblot gasping out his life, with another stretched out on the step of Barotte's door.

When they had done—it was possibly five minutes—the Sergeant Soufflet came up and saluted; I think he had visions of those little *verres* of cognac, and he was not disappointed

"You received my orders then?" said Patinot, who was being bandaged by Roucou and Arrentièrre.

"Yes, mon Capitaine, but I am sorry——" he paused, a trifle embarrassed.

"Sorry for what, sergeant?"

"For the messenger, mon Capitaine; you see we mistook him for a Prussian, and——"

"He is dead then?" said Patinot, with a quick glance at his companion, Roucou.

"Yes, mon Capitaine, Etienne Dubourg fired before we discovered our mistake—that is poor Etienne yonder, on the step over there."

* * *

You may read General Trochu's account of that affair for the benefit of the good Parisians; how a patrol of the Garde Mobiles surprised eighty of the enemy under the hill of *Valérien*, killed sixty, and bore the rest away in triumph.

But I have told you the true story, which was why Arrentièrre and I returned to Paris; and when we heard some days after that a Prussian shell had blown the studios to fragments I said to my friend "Are you sorry?"

And Arrentièrre, turning his eyes on the rapier which he had brought away with him, shook his head with a little shrug of the shoulders, and for the space of three consecutive cigarettes neither of us spoke a word.

THE END.

D H Parry

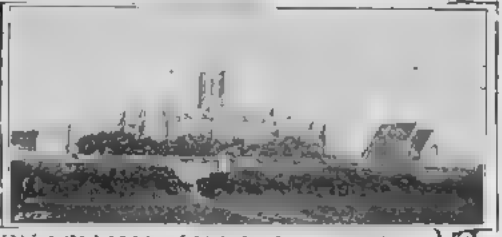
SOME ENGLISH SCHOOLS

MANNAMEAD COLLEGE PLYMOUTH

KENT COLLEGE CANTERBURY

MATHEMATICAL SCH ROCHESTER

BLAIRLODGE SCHOOL STIRLINGSHIRE



KING WILLIAMS COLLEGE I OF MAN

THE KING'S HOSPITAL DUBLIN

Google

CHRISTMAS IN OTHER LANDS.

When old Father Time ushers in, "'mid snow and ice," good old Christmas—or "Christmass"—each country, after its own style, celebrates the sacred season in some appropriate manner.

In Norway a very beautiful custom exists. Everybody, prince and peasant alike, gets a sheaf of corn, and attaches it to the end of a pole. They then place this on some high point about the house, for the birds of the air to have and enjoy a real Christmas feast. And these little songsters, the moment they see the sheaves hoisted up, flutter down, and the eager and noisy chirping announces to the Norwegians the satisfaction with which their generous offerings are accepted.

In Italy all endeavour to make the Christmas dinner the chief item of their day's programme. And, for the humbler folks, whose desires are often more than their pockets can satisfy, gifts, etc., are collected by some who procure them by sending the upper class a card, in return for which they expect some suitable donation, which, needless to say, is seldom denied.

On Christmas Eve, far away in Switzerland, they enjoy the season right heartily, and one of their games is this: All the boys and girls are gathered in one room, and, although they seem to be deeply interested in some way or other, pay more attention to the door. Now and again someone raises a shout, and the effect is magical as well as mirth-provoking. All, in a trice, are hiding, either under tables or chairs, or some other place of shelter, but soon they perceive the false alarm, and boldly walk back again. The result is that, when least expected, although it is always looked for, the door is suddenly thrown wide open, and someone (who is usually a parent) begins to pelt the boys and girls with apples, peaches, nuts, and such like, and with some force.

Again they beat a retreat, this time with reason, and, when the door is closed, they cautiously creep out and attempt to secure some of the stuff lying scattered on the floor. Then, perhaps, whilst in the middle of this, the door is again opened and the volley repeated.

Imagine the fun! There one, dozens of eatables piled up between his arms, is hastening to some place of safety, when he receives a blow on the cheek with a peach, and then another, and still another, until at last he has to drop his burden, and retreat—*bootyless!*

But when this is finished, the best of it comes in when all begin to dispose of everything they have managed to commandeer, and he (or she) who has the most will, I think, have the best time of it.

James Weir.

A "PRINCE CHARLIE" ANECDOTE.

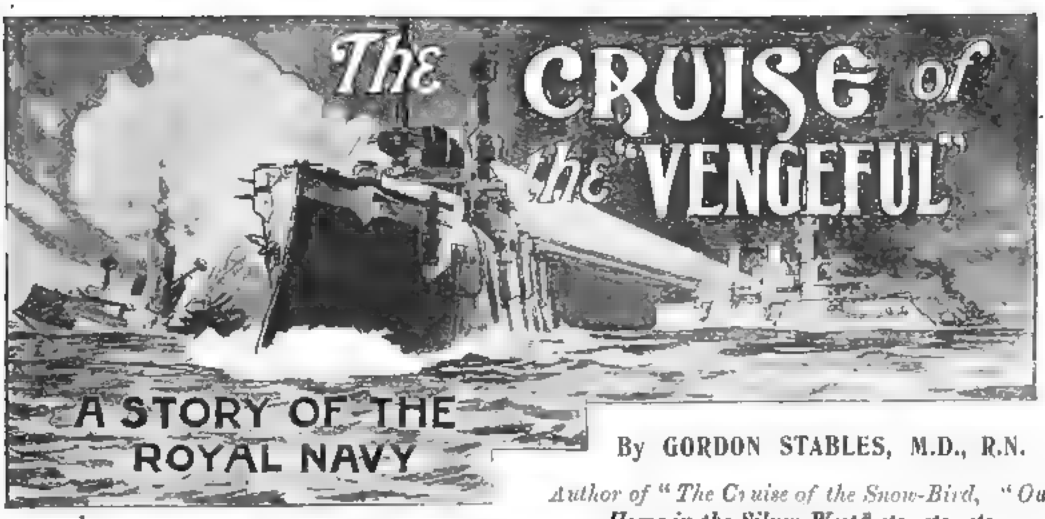
On my father's estate, which is near Inverness, there lives an old woman, ninety-three years of age, whose great-grandfather was the blacksmith who saved Prince Charlie's life at the Rout of Moy. Her great-great-aunt was a servant at an hotel in Inverness, and she heard the English soldiers saying that they were coming out to surprise Prince Charlie at Moy, where the wife of the Macintosh was concealing him; so she stole out of the hotel, and ran from Inverness to Moy, a distance of twelve miles, and told her cousin, the blacksmith, who got together five old men, all that were left to guard Moy Hall. These he stationed at corners of the road. When the English troops came in sight, he shouted military orders, which the men repeated; the English, thinking they were surprised, fled to Inverness, to the great relief of Prince Charlie.

After this the blacksmith had to go into hiding, as the English offered £100 for him, dead or alive. For many years he wandered about the hills, and at last ventured to return to this estate, where he was given occupation as a shepherd; when he died the Macintosh's wife had a monument made and sent from Italy, and put over his grave, as no one in the Highlands dared make it; and you may see it in the Moy kirk-yard, with the Stuart arms engraved on it.

Three years ago, when we had a Jubilee bonfire, old Mrs. Fraser (then ninety) climbed up the hills to light it, and danced as gaily as the younger people; till just lately she would tell us all about the Rout, as told her by her grand-parents, and also about the people whom she calls the "bluidy Stewarts."

Over our moor there runs a road made by General Wade's soldiers, before the battle of Culloden; there is also a stone here, where Prince Charlie ate his breakfast before the battle of Culloden, after having slept at a cottage on our estate, now pulled down. From this stone he could see the English soldiers in the distance. In a house near here there are all sorts of curios of Prince Charlie's, including the blacksmith's sword.

Gertrude E. Malkin.



By GORDON STABLES, M.D., R.N.

Author of "The Cruise of the Snow-Bird," "Our Home in the Silver West," etc., etc., etc.

Illustrated by George Hawley.

SYNOPSIS.—CHAPTERS I.—VIII.

H.M.S. *Vengeful* goes to sea with sealed orders on the declaration of war between Great Britain and two European powers. The junior doctor—Elliot—who has newly joined the ship, arouses the suspicions of some of the officers by his strange, inquisitive ways. A watch is set on Elliot, who is caught, red-handed, stealing important documents from the commander's cabin. It is discovered that Elliot is a French spy, known in his own country as "Louis mon Brave." He is condemned to death, but escapes by diving over the ship's side and swimming to the Madagascan shore. The *Vengeful* proceeds on her course and is attacked by two French cruisers—the *Majuba* and the *Cronje*. She sinks the *Cronje*, and the *Majuba* surrenders at the close of a hot chase.

CHAPTER IX.

SANDIE ELLIOT'S STRANGE ADVENTURE.

IN less than half an hour a prize crew had taken possession of the *Majuba*, and her decks were being cleared of blood, the dead buried *sans cérémonie*, and the wounded placed under the care of the surgeons, British and French. Ghastly work all this was, and best done under the shadow of night.

The officers were free *en parole*; only the men were guarded, and, indeed, they were but a cut-throat crew—socialists, anarchists, imperialists—all were to be found in their ranks; for, on the declaration of war, every French shipping port had been swept, so to speak, and here were the sweepings—the refuse. In the British army we will have none but Britons, and a spirit of real *camaraderie* exists 'twixt officers and men.

Here it was very different indeed, and among the prisoners you would have found Russians, Germans, Belgians, and Finns—a motley, rubbishy, rubbly crew, that no Englishman would have cared to command. Capital pirates, however, many of these fellows would have made; I don't believe that any one of the lot was encumbered with such an old-fashioned affair as a conscience, and would have sheathed his knife in his own commander's heart, or in that of a messmate, if there had been anything to gain by the act.

Both officers and men of the *Vengeful* turned in all standing that night, with their arms close beside them. Perhaps Capel himself never slept a wink, and all were glad enough when the sun once more silvered the waves.

The ships were kept close together; the little *Tadpole* about one mile ahead. This long, low, desperate-looking craft seemed proud to be allowed to head the procession; and though every great rolling wave hid her from view, she was soon *en evidence* again on top of the next. Thus she made her way, pitching, rolling a bit, but dancing onward and onward as cheerily as any old gun-brig in the dashing days of Dibdin.

The great cruisers followed steadily, soberly, but none the less speedily.

The *Vengeful*, with her prize, was *en route* for Johanna, one of the Comoro Islands, that lie about half-way between Cape Amber in Madagascar and the shores of Africa.

Solemn service was conducted this morning, and one officer, with fourteen men of the *Vengeful*, were laid to rest—if rest it should be—beneath the blue waves of the Indian Ocean.

Another day and night at sea would enable them to reach Johanna, which is a well-fortified coaling station; its great, reef-guarded harbour

of Pomoney inaccessible to any but the smaller class of war ships.

But who could have guessed that the little *Tadpole* would have come across, and taken on board, the real Dr. Elliot at Zanzibar! Yet, such was the case, and here, on board the *Vengeful*, he sat on the evening of this very day, relating his adventures to his messmates after dinner.

These adventures, if they could not be called wild, were strange enough at all events. And Elliot, who spoke with a strong northern accent, kept the table interested for a time, and amused as well.

I have not space enough at command in which to tell all Sandie Elliot's story. Nor does it signify *very* much.

I pick him up, therefore, just as the "Flying Scotsman," which now runs at a speed of 100 miles an hour, has passed Peterborough on a dreary day in early January. There is no dreariness at Sandie's heart, however. He is young, and strong, and happy; the world—a world of wild adventure, he believes—is all before him. He is going southward to join the *Vengeful* for foreign service; his commission is in the breast-pocket of his coat, which he taps to make sure of it, then wraps the Scottish plaid more firmly round his knees, leans back and gazes out at the landscape that is rushing past him.

When Sandie had last left his Highland home, with the medical degree in his pocket, which he had won, with honours, at the great northern University of Aberdeen, and took train for London, to stand his "exam." for a commission, November winds were blowing "snell and keen," and as he neared the world's metropolis, just as gloaming was beginning to fall, bleak and eerie enough was the outlook compared to the wild mountain land where his father tilled a bonnie farm. He had even sighed as he thought of the gowany braes his sisters and he used to "speel" in summer; of the wimpling streams in which they used to fish; and the forests, dark and solemn, they were wont to wander through.

But — ugh! — here were only damp, cold meadows, green but flat; patches of unwholesome-looking, stagnant water; leafless, dripping trees, and long rows of bare-fingered pollards lining the river's banks. Anything more weird than those pollards he had never beheld. Each and all of them looked like demons dancing in the cold uncertain light.

But Sandie had passed the Board with flying colours, and all was different now. Nor was it the warm feeling of hope and happiness in his heart that alone gave him comfort. For Sandie had a bit of a sweetheart, to whom he had sworn to be true, and with whom he had broken a "ring o' gowd" before he'd kissed her a fond good-bye; he had gentle, loving sisters, too, whose prayers would help to protect him when far away at sea—ay, and a father and mother whom he loved and respected.

But look at the landscape yonder—how clear! — how brightly beautiful! The meadows are white, the pollards are bunches of beautiful coral, and the river, with its silvery sides, is as black in the centre as ink.

London at last! and Sandie settles down for a few days in decent lodgings. Hotels are too extravagant.

But Sandie does not see why he shouldn't enjoy himself in a rational way. He "does" the music halls and all the sights as if he were a Yankee. And it is while doing these that he meets with the strangest adventure that has ever yet befallen him.

He gets beset one morning in a London frost-fog while on a pilgrimage to Madame Tussaud's. Sandie has never seen such a fog before, and he doesn't like it. Men are like poplar trees walking; hansom cabs come up out of the misty darkness in a mysterious kind of way, and just as mysteriously disappear. The gas-lamps look like farthing candles in the gloom; the electric lights that bob over fruit-stalls are mere glow-worms. It is, indeed, a dismal day.

Sandie is now in some quiet side street, and is wondering where he can be, when a tall and very handsome gentleman, evidently a foreigner, rushes up to him.

"O, sare, can you tell me where I can find one physician, or doctaire?"

"*I* am 'one physician,'" says Sandie proudly, "one and a-half, you might say, for I'm a doubly qualified man from Aberdeen."

"Then, O sare, will you come—and quickly?"

"Lead on, sir," says Sandie.

Down the street, through a lane, into a warehouse, and out again at the back; then down some dark cellar steps, and he finds himself in a cold, bare, gas-lighted room—finds himself, moreover, looking nervously down the barrel of a six-chambered revolver, presented at his head by his captor.

"My preesoner you are, sare. Make any noise and you are one dead man!"

Sandie saw the fellow was in terrible earnest, and concluded he had best keep quiet for a time.

For three whole weeks he remained here, his bed only a bench, his cellar dismally dark, even in daylight, only he was well fed. But his keys, his purse, and his papers, including the Commission he prized so much, and his appointment to the *Vengeful*, were all taken away. He was robbed

even of his identity; and all he had to be thankful for was the life spared to him.

His gaolers were two, but though they brought him food and water, they hardly ever spoke. Every night he was locked in and left to his own sad meditations. He expected nothing else but death, and had at last even begun to think this would, indeed, be a relief.

But one night he was awakened from a beautiful home-dream by hearing something stir in his cell. To his horror a trap-door in the centre of the floor slowly opened upwards, and a strange-looking being in black oil-skins, lantern in hand, scrambled slowly up.

Was he about to be murdered? The man's first words reassured him, however.

"Hullo, matie, who be you?"

Glad to speak to someone Sandie at once told him all his sad story.

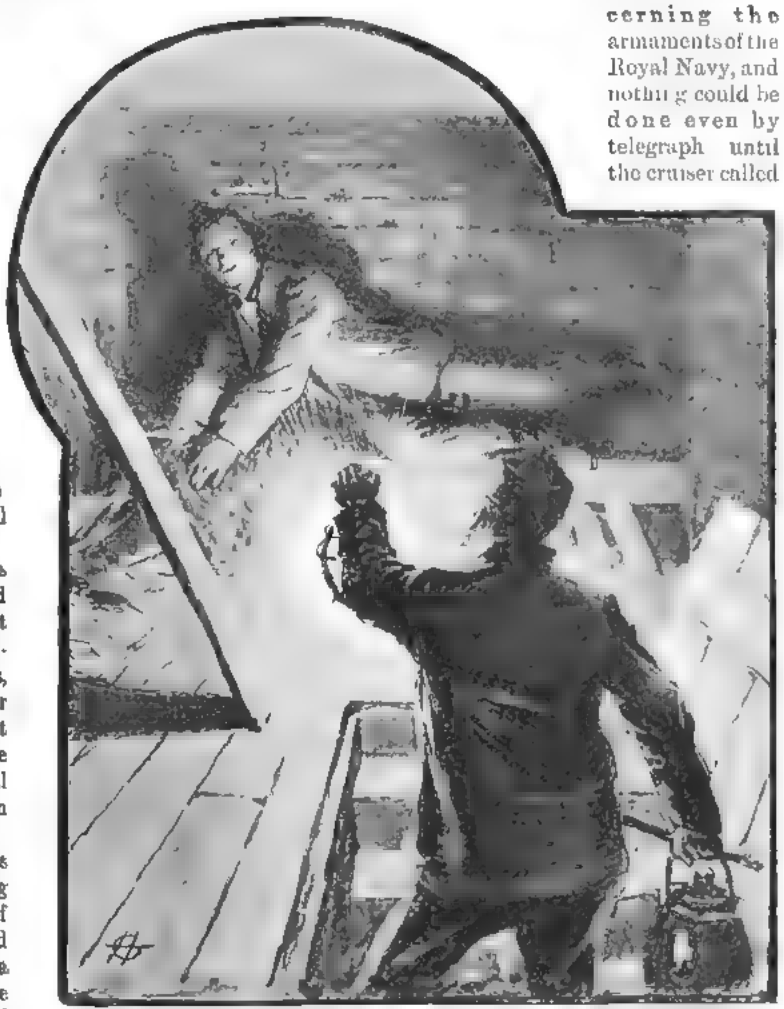
"Well, ye looks harmless enough. Just like me, and I'm a-trying to make a 'onest livin' by catchin' rats and picking up swag, silver spoons, watches and sich in the sewer below 'ere. If ye likes to trust yerself to Jack Scratt, come along, and my 'ole woman 'll make a cup o' tea for yer in no time."

Liberty in any shape was welcome, and together along the slippery black banks of the awful sewer Sandie and his rescuer crept for fully a mile. In half an hour's time he found himself above ground once more, and enjoying a humble but hearty welcome in Jack's one room.

And Jack found Sandie's lodgings for him, too, but his boxes were gone, and it was indeed in a pitiable plight that he presented himself next forenoon at Whitehall.

His story was listened to with rapt attention. He was conducted from one department to another, and notes were taken of all he said, for it gave a clue to one of the most villainous cases of espionage that had ever happened in London. The notorious spy Louis mon Brave had indeed played his game well, for he was a man who could assume any disguise. State papers had been copied and secrets obtained which were worth a king's ransom.

Meanwhile, the man had evidently sailed in the *Vengeful*, in which he would obtain most valuable information concerning the armaments of the Royal Navy, and nothing could be done even by telegraph until the cruiser called at the Cape. Dr. Elliot was sent out by Suez in the hopes that he might join his ship at Zanzibar, and denounce the spy who had stolen his papers and probably usurped his place.



A STRANGE BEING, LANTERN IN HAND, SCRAMBLED SLOWLY UPWARDS.

It is needless to say that the cellar in which Sandie had been confined so long was never discovered. But the police could tell us that even stranger stories than his are brought to light every day in the great world of London.

* * * * *

Arrived at Johanna, the great cruisers dropped anchor outside the reef, but the torpedo destroyer, with the commander on board, got inside, and as soon as the *Tadpole* was moored, Capel landed on the stony beach, was guided up through the jungle and scrub to the Consul's house, and there made his report.

Johanna is one of the most beautiful islands in the Indian Ocean. Hills and dales and bosky glens, with many a wee meandering stream, and woods that climb the mountain sides and fringe their very tops. Fruit of every tropical kind, wild flowers, bright-winged birds—notably king-fishers—snakes, wasps, and flying foxes, but never a wild beast to be seen. An ideal island, and if fairies dwell anywhere in the world, here is their sylvan home.

CHAPTER X.

A TERRIBLE TELEGRAM.

An Arab Sultan still existed in Johanna, away over at the other side of the island. In his fort or palaces, surrounded by the squalid town and its fierce but somewhat malodorous citizens and soldiery, this man lived the life of some old feudal lord. He certainly owed some sort of allegiance to the Sultan of Zanzibar, but he kept his own fleet of dhows, his own little army, his harem of beautiful wives, and fancied himself one of the greatest monarchs on earth.

In truth he was a handsome fellow. Next in picturesqueness to the Highland garb is that which your gentleman Arab wears, and well did it become the splendid form of Sultan Ben Ali. His face was like that of some beautiful statue. Escaping from his gilded velvet turban, his long dark hair fell in ringlets even to his waist, which was begirt with a gold, diamond-studded sword belt.

Now, unless one shoots snakes, flying foxes and black wasps, or goes in for fishing—bomitoes, sharks and skip-jacks—there is very little sport in or around Johanna. Butterflies and beetles, however, afford good exercise, if one desires to make a collection, and does not mind tumbling over a precipice now and then. But during the week the ships lay here undergoing repairs, officers and men—including the middies—found life rather slow.

Mr. Cummings, the Consul, however, and his wife and young daughters were all "jolly fellows," and at this Viceroy's house there was always a free table. The girls were sweetly pretty, and made much of the middies, who, in spite of the fact that patent fuel had to be shipped for the stoke-room, and the prisoners of war to be looked after, managed to get on shore in driblets. I but speak the truth when I say that the sweetly pretty girls made the very most of those middies who happened to be on shore of an evening, quite ignoring for the time being the boys in blue and gold they might have flirted with the night before. Picnics were got up, however, and in one week no fewer than two dances took place on board.

When I knew Johanna first—the Consulate end of it I mean—there was nothing but jungle for a mile or two 'twixt the beach and the Viceroy's house, but now quite a little town had sprung up near to the sea, a tiny pier, entrenchments, a church, a prison, and a fort.

Before the pier was built, landing safely was a fine art, for the beach all along is a chaos of round smooth stones as large as one's hand—as large even as a *cocoa-de-mer*.* Each advancing wave bombards the beach with these, each receding one sucks them back, and by night or by day the hurtling noise is deafening and terrific. When an officer leapt nimbly out of the boat it was generally to find his feet carried away, and he himself sucked seaward in the surf. Then a rope would be thrown to him, and he scrambled out smiling, if there happened to be a smile left in him.

Well, there was not only the fuelling to be seen to, but the landing of the prisoners. The officers were retained, but those riff-raff foreign sailors were sent on shore in the pinnaces—nearly 600 of them—and quartered in prison, where they would remain till transports could be sent to convey them to the Cape, or Aden, at the entrance of the Red Sea.

At the Consulate was a telegraph station, and Capel set that to work first thing. He told them at home of all his wonderful adventures, and modestly enough of the battle at sea and how it ended. Newspapers in Britain were full of the glorious naval victory that same evening, and the Admiralty telegraphed its thanks.

But Capel was also informed that the price of £5,000 had been put on the head of that king of spies, Louis mon Brave. This money would be paid to any naval officer or officers, civilian or civilians, who effected his capture, dead or alive.

Capel, who was facetious, wired to the Admiralty clerk that, though it was generally a matter of little difficulty to capture a dead man, it happened that in this case Louis mon Brave had gone below with the French sub-marine boat *Le Diable*, and hadn't made his number yet.

That was a long telegram; but then Capel had

* The largest fruit in the known world, and growing, I think, only on the Seyschelle Islands of the Indian Ocean.

full command of the wire and nothing to pay. He might have telegraphed the five books of Moses if inclined.

"The crayfish," he added, "will have eaten him ere now; we may not be able to find even the head, with the price on it."

Click, click, click, went the wire a few minutes afterwards, spelling out the words:—

"Hang the head! Let us have proof of the beggar's death."

Thus wired the facetious Admiralty clerk.

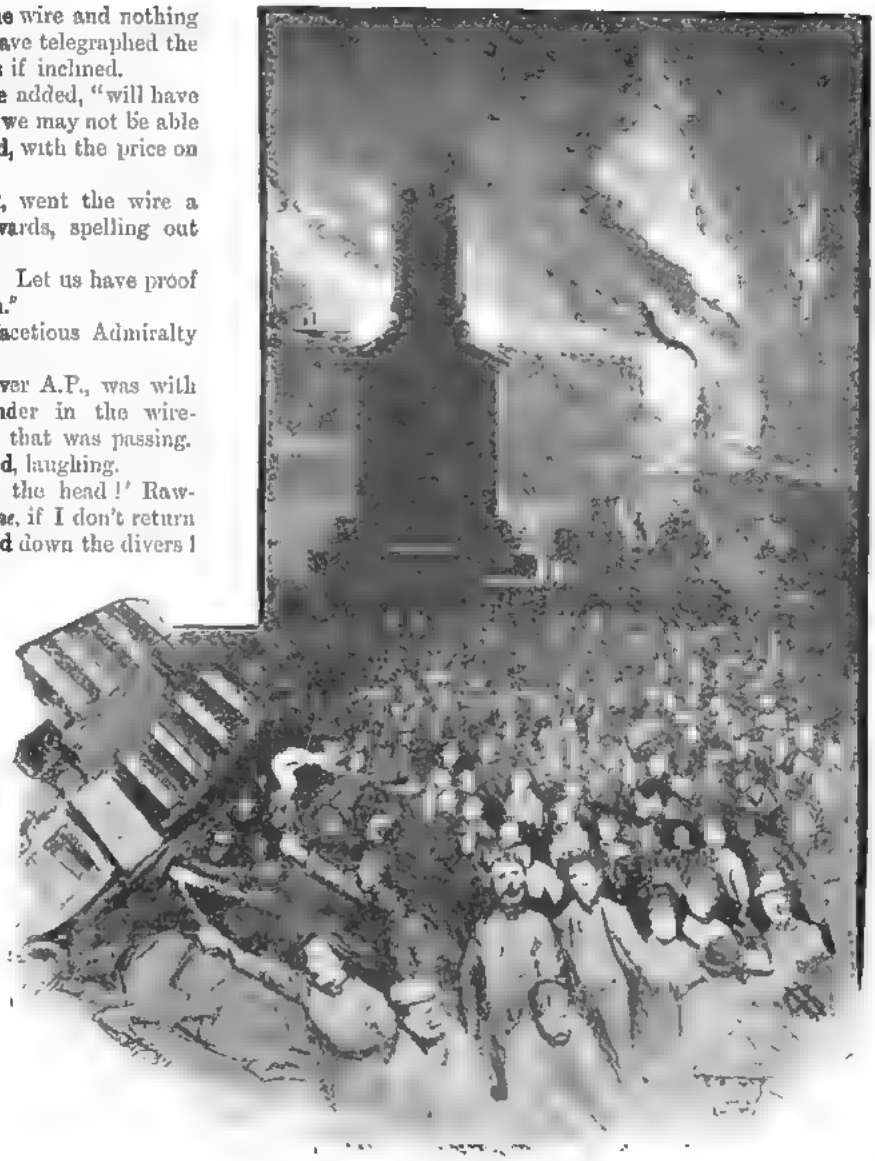
Rawlings, the clever A.P., was with the young commander in the wire-room, and knew all that was passing.

Capel turned round, laughing.

"He says 'Hang the head!' Rawlings. Well, hang *me*, if I don't return to Lyra Bay and send down the divers! With apologies to the crayfish, we'll have the head, and Dr. O'Shane shall mummify it; then we'll send it home to the Admiralty in a despatch box."

"Good, sir, good! And isn't it possible we may raise that same rascally boat, *Le Diable*, and read off the enemy's secret? That submarine may come in handy, Captain Capel."

"We'll try, anyhow. That is a grand idea of yours. But now I'm going to get them to tell us what is doing in England. You stand by and write as I read off."



INCENDIARY FIRES IN THE HEART OF LONDON.

Up till now both the commander and Rawlings had been merry enough, but hardly had the little black fingers of the telegraph begun to spell out the news from home, before their faces fell. There was no more laughing now; the tidings received took them flat aback, so terrible and so unexpected was it. And though transmitted in brief, it was easy enough to read between the lines, and even between the words. Let us try to do the same, and we may then be able to understand the fearful straits to which Britain may one day be reduced in case of a naval coalition and subsequent invasion of our dear native land.

Here is how the telegram ran:—

Britain invaded in the north and in the south—Important cities isolated—Rumoured rising in Ireland, and Cork in the hands of the rebels—Destruction of many ships of war by submarine boats—Buoys taken up by the British—Lighthouses darkened by us—For the time being French command the Channel—Russian fleet from the Baltic—Aberdeen bombarded and fired from end to end—Inhabitants fleeing to the mountains, but fighting

grimly all the way—French army of 100,000 landed at Hastings—Two hundred guns—Marching on London—Yeomanry and Volunteers hurrying to meet them—Many cables cut—Incendiary fires in heart of London, the supposed work of naturalized foreigners—Great exodus of the riff-raff East-end population, chiefly foreign—Spreading themselves all over the Midlands—Life as well as property destroyed — Murder, robbery, and rapine — Japanese and American fleets reported put to sea — Italians wavering—All other nations seem neutral, but looking on with interest at the great conflict, many hoping to see the British ship of State burned to the water's edge—Telegram just come in—Windsor Castle has been——

Commander Capel waited and waited, watched and watched, but the tiny dark hand on the white dial clicked no more. It wavered to and fro for just a moment, then stood still.

Capel looked at Rawlings, and Rawlings looked at Capel.

"Good heavens, sir!" said the A.P. "What does all this mean? It is fearful!"

"True, true," Capel replied calmly; "but you, Rawlings, will I think be the last to lose your presence of mind."

"If America, Japan with her monster navy, and Italy, sir, assist us, surely Britain will regain possession of the seas, if, indeed, she has lost it. What think you, sir?"

Capel was walking hurriedly up and down the room, and hardly heard the words addressed to him. Rawlings repeated them.

The commander stopped suddenly beside the A.P.'s chair, the upper bar of which he clutched with a force that all but broke it. His face was pale, and his dark eyes flashed and scintillated, as they met the upturned glance of his companion.

"What do I think?"—he almost gasped the words out—"What do I think, my friend? Why this, Rawlings, *this*: the day when Britain's own ships cannot defend Britain's own shores, shall see us taking second-rate rank among the nations!"

"But, Rawlings," he continued almost fiercely, "that shall never be while *I* live—while *you* live—while patriotism still burns in Britannia's breast. Let the dark, cold waves meet above our heads, and death close our eyes, ere we behold Britain's foes giving Britons laws, Rawlings!"

He sank into his chair, and for a few moments buried his face in his hands, as if half ashamed of having given way to excitement.

When he leaned back once more, his face, though still pale, was calm. Not a trace there now of the anguish that but a few moments before seemed to rend his soul in pieces.

There sat Rawlings, the imperturbable, the born detective, and yonder Capel of the conning tower.

They looked at each other for a few seconds, as if each were reading the other's soul.

Then hand met hand in a fearless, honest grip; but neither spoke.

And yet both these brave fellows knew that the last cable had been cut, and that their native land was isolated, and no longer could they receive orders from the Admiralty.

But they could act on those they had already received, privately, before leaving the shores of their native land, and again in their sealed orders.

Such an astounding telegram as our young commander had just received would have quite stunned some men and bred despondency.

But Nature had formed Capel in quite a different mould. Reverses and misfortunes rouse such spirits as his. He rose to the occasion with all the determination and fierceness of a wounded lion.

The Consul was returning from his plantation when Capel met him, while hurrying off towards the beach.

"Good afternoon, Captain Capel," said the Consul. "You haven't seen over my sugar plantation yet; you haven't seen my new crushing machinery, or heard my niggers singing as they work in the glorious sunshine."

Capel looked at the man wonderingly. He was a native of Yorkshire—a simple minded farmer who had been made Consul through interest, and who lived the life of a Crusoe in this beautiful but lonesome island—happy to have real quiet and rest, happy in the bosom of his family, working away on his sugar estate, receiving his salary from Britain regularly, and laying up a bit in his old stocking for his children, or for them and himself when he should become old; but he really took no thought for anything else. He was comfortable; he was jolly, and free from care of every kind. The outside world might wag away just as it pleased; it neither concerned nor troubled Consul Cummings. Of course, he knew we were at war with France. But "Bless my soul!" he told his wife and daughters, "that is nothing. Britain has always beaten her foes as yet, and she is going to do it this time, so keep your minds easy, my dears."

"You have, no doubt, heard the news?" said Commander Capel. "You must be in daily or hourly telegraphic communication with Britain."

Cummings laughed as he replied. "They haven't rung me up for a week, and, to tell you the truth, I never bother them unless they do."

"You won't have to bother them for some time, anyhow, my dear sir, for the cable is cut."

"Good job, too!" said Cummings.

"England is invaded by the French in the south, and Scotland, in the far north, by Russians. It is bad news."

Cummings shrugged his shoulders, and lit a cigarette.

"I pity the French and Russians," he said unconcernedly; "but, of course——"

"Of course what?" cried Capel, who was getting impatient.

"Have a cigarette? No! I was going to say—of course you will dine with us to-night. Nice bit o' fish my daughter caught."

"Thanks, I'll see, I'll see. I must hurry off now. Excuse me." And Capel suited action to his words.

Cumming gazed after him for a few seconds. "Extraordinary man!" he said; then quietly rolled and lit a fresh cigarette.

In half an hour's time, or less, Capel was outside the dreaded bar, where the great ships lay at anchor, and having a private interview with Captain Bullard. At this interview Rawlings was also present. The young and daring fellow's genius was known and admitted by all, and even Bullard did not think it below his dignity to consult him occasionally on his own private affairs, for Rawlings frequently dined with him—the paymaster himself caring very little indeed, for he was by no means jealous.

A splendid sailor was Bullard, of the true man-o'-war type—just the man to fight his ship till the last, and go down with her if need were, with his flag flying, as the Frenchman had done. But he was hardly the man to think out great problems, and would rather any day be advised than suggest advice.

But when he received Capel's report, and when Rawlings read the terrible telegram to him, he certainly was taken aback for the time being. He leaned back in his easy chair with lowered brows, and a face so full of concern that his great Newfoundland must needs place his monster paws on his shoulder and lick his face.

"And what would *you* do, Capel?" he said at last.

"Sir," replied the brave young commander, "I made up my mind about that in the boat as we were coming off. Didn't we, Rawlings?"

"We did," said the A. P., with a quiet little inclination of the head.

"You have done me the honour to consult me, Captain Bullard, and here is what I should do. If I thought it would be best, I should hurry home at once. I should not attempt to go by Suez, for the canal may already be blocked or blockaded by the enemy; I should go by the Cape, coaling at Ascension. Britain needs all her navy in this terrible crisis, and the enemy thinks that by cutting the cables she will keep our squadrons at their stations. The enemy has made a fatal mistake. The Channel fleet, or a very large squadron thereof, is probably now off Morocco, but the very fact of the cable being sundered will raise suspicion and send these ships speeding homewards."

"True, Capel, true; go on."

"Well, sir, we can do no more good here. We can protect our commerce by sinking and battering the French and Russian cruisers that are after it. We have captured one good ship; now we want to run up to Zanzibar and gather a crew for her. Meanwhile we should send the *Tadpole* back to Lyra Bay, to raise the French submarine."

"Good, good!"

"I believe it is good. And when, with our fast and powerful *Vengeful*—the swiftest craft in the wide world, sir!—we clear the enemy out of the Indian Ocean, we can then return, if we get no order to the contrary, and help the main fleet to pepper the French in good earnest."

"That will do, I think," said Bullard; "and we shall pray to the God of Battles to bless our cause."

"Oh yes, sir, we'll pray right enough! But He has already placed power in our hands, and that we must use."

"And now, sir," he added, "with your permission I shall go and break the sad news to wardroom and gunroom."

"Good morning, Captain Bullard," said Rawlings, and, bowing, he quietly followed the commander.

CHAPTER XI.

HOW THE NEWS WAS RECEIVED ON BOARD.

Commander Capel entered the wardroom with Rawlings, and found it fairly well crowded. It was getting very near luncheon time, and the officers were all hungry, and happy in consequence.

Capel had a smile on his face, not an overjoyous one, however, but everyone knew on the instant that he had news to communicate. So they gathered round him—expectant.

The commander looked towards the door first.

"Message boy!" he shouted.

The sentry outside took up the call, and in a second or two it was ringing all over the ship.

Bobby Blair came tumbling aft, up the ladders, along the decks, then down the ladders. It was a kind of obstacle race, and the lad was in fine form.

"Yes, sir." He was standing cap in hand now before his commander.

"Tell the master-at-arms I should like to see

the gunroom officers in their own mess-room in five minutes' time."

"Ay, ay, sir," and off went Bobby.

"Gentlemen," he said to his messmates, "it is bad news I have to give you. Mr. Rawlings will read you the telegram I luckily received to-day before the cable was cut."

"Cable cut, sir!"

"Listen!"

The A.P. immediately read out the wire, and when he had finished the silence that reigned for fully half a minute was most impressive.

But now the stewards and servants came bustling in with the luncheon, and presently conversation was very animated indeed.

Nevertheless there was a heaviness and depression at every heart now which it was difficult, nay, impossible, to dispel. These officers could only hope and pray for the best and do their duty. But it must be remembered that there was no one sitting around that table who had not those who were dear to him at home in merry England. Merry England indeed! What a mockery these words seem on an occasion like this! Their country, which had not been successfully invaded for hundreds of years, would now be over-run. Friends and relatives, parents, brothers or sisters, wives or sweethearts, would all be at the mercy of the dastardly French and ruthless Russians. The thought was a terrible one, and it was even more terrible to remember that the riff-raff and sickly scum of London's foul East-end would have even less mercy than the armed enemy.

Immediately after he had communicated the news to his own messmates, Capel hurried off to the gunroom, and every young officer uncovered his head and stood silently and respectfully up as he entered.

He did not keep them long waiting. But the receipt of the news spread less sorrow and gloom here than it had done in the wardroom. You cannot separate happiness from bounding health; and hope dwells ever in the breasts of the young. There was indeed a wild exultant shout when the commander finished speaking.

"I say," cried the midshipmite, Mr. Merridale, who had quite recovered from his accident, "I say, sir; we'll have lots of fighting now, won't we, sir?"

"You're full of it, my boy," replied the commander, "but think of them at home."

"*I've* been thinking about them, sir," said the smart young officer Curtis. "The French and Russians you mean, don't you, sir? They're in the wrong parlour, aren't they? The British are the spiders, the French the flies, and won't our fellows pick 'em off just!"

"Never a foe will return, sir," cried another middy.

"I hope not," said Capel.

"We'll kill them all," cried Paddy O'Brien, "and follow the rest to their own shores, by jabers, and smash them on the threshold. Hoorah!"

Then a sturdy young Scot sprang on the table and commenced to sing the national anthem.

With his hat in his hand till the very last line was sung, stood Capel, then quietly slipped away, just as they began to shout in chorus:—

> Rule, Britannia, Britannia rules the waves,
> Britons never, NEVER, *NEVER*, shall be slaves.

* * * * *

In hard work there is always surcease of sorrow, and although next day was Sunday there was much that was necessary to be done. The clergyman's sermon was unusually impressive, but far from saddening. They must trust in God, he told them; He had never deserted a good cause, but always blessed it. The invasion was a fearful affliction, yet even while they thought of those at home they would find consolation in prayer. Let those pray now who had never really prayed before. Those who knew Him must cling the closer to Him.

There were tears in the good pastor's eyes—O'Grady was his name—indeed, those tears rolled unheeded down his cheeks as, holding his right hand on high, he concluded with these impressive words: "We will trust in God, my brothers, and do our duty, even should that duty be to drown or die in our country's cause."

Next day work was begun in earnest, for both ships had to make good repairs before putting to sea. The engineers and artificers on board were the best that could have been had—workman-looking fellows who were capable of doing anything.

Much of the labour was done on shore, and the Consul sent quite a crowd of dusky natives to assist in keeping up fires for the blacksmiths and engineers; but, of course, these men were not skilled workmen.

On the Tuesday, while Commander Capel was supervising the operations in the workshops near the pier, with his little satellite, Bobby, hovering near, and ready to carry a message to the back of the north wind if told to, Rawlings strolled quietly up and saluted.

"I've an idea, sir," he said.

"Your head is full of them, Mr. Rawlings, but tell me."

"Well, sir, among those of our prisoners who are not French there must be a few good fellows and skilled mechanics. Why not offer them freedom if they will work quietly for us? I am sure I could pick out fifty."

"Then do so by all means!" cried Capel. "It is a happy thought. Mr. Curtis there will go with you, and a dozen armed bluejackets. Bring them here. I need not tell you to be careful in your choice."

"No, sir."

In half an hour Rawlings was back with a whole gang of really good and reliable-looking men—forty-three in all. Capel questioned them, and found that they were, for the most part, skilled mechanics and tradesmen—no less than fifteen were engineers—whom drink, or evil fortune, had ruined.

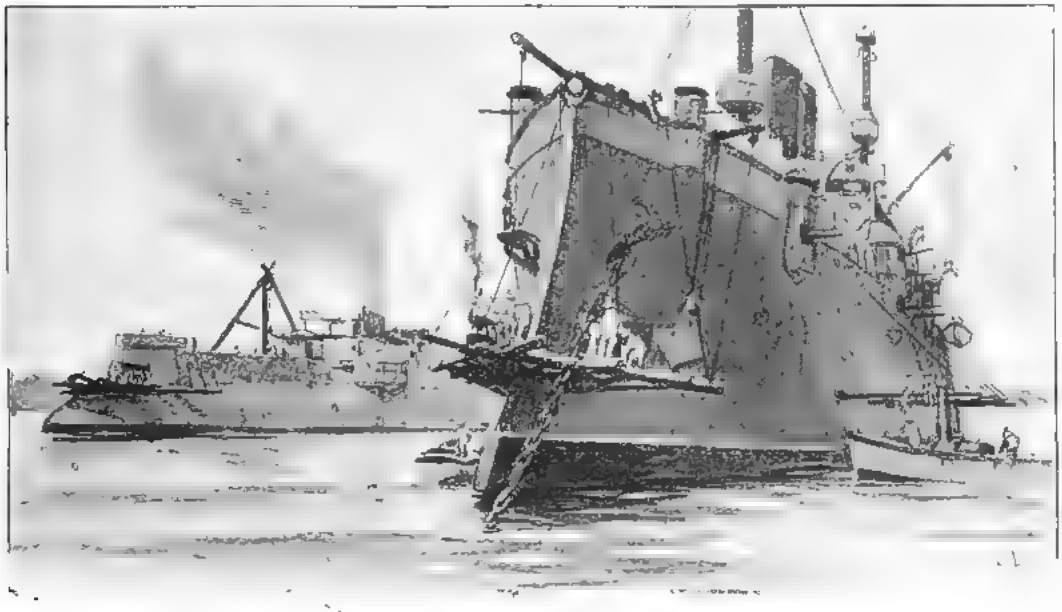
"Now, men," he said, "I will employ you all. And these are my terms: I will pay you at the end of the commission good wages according to your rating; you will be well clothed and well fed in every way, and I will take you to England when I go, and set you free, after paying you the wages you may have honestly earned. You must swear to me, however, that you will not enter the French or Russian navy after we set you free."

Hands were raised heavenwards, and in solemn voices every man there shouted the words "We swear!"

"Now then," concluded Capel, "my engineer officers shall take you over, and give you that species of work to do you can most easily perform. Just remember, however, that we must have discipline and strict obedience to orders, and that treachery in any shape or form will be punished with death. Go, men. You have everything to gain, and nothing to lose."

I myself need not add that there were no Frenchmen in this gang of workmen. Britain never asked any man to use his arms against his own country.

So now the work went merrily on, both on shore and afloat. Yet neither Captain Bullard nor Capel was altogether easy in his mind, because the monster cruisers were moored in a somewhat dangerous position, outside the bar; the Mozambique Channel and the Indian Ocean are at times swept by storms of hurricane power, which come on suddenly, with thunder, lightning, and even hail, and sink many a gallant ship, or swift Arab dhow.



BOTH SHIPS HAD TO MAKE GOOD REPAIRS BEFORE PUTTING TO SEA.

The commander had intended paying a visit to the Sultan of Johanna; but the telegram first, and now the work, had driven that potentate for the time being out of head. But when the labour of repairing the cruisers was almost finished, and the monster fore-turret of the *Vengeful*, greatly to the credit of the engineer officers and the "black gang"* moved to the touch of a button

* The stokers and engine-room hands generally are so designated.

as easily as ever it had done; Capel had a talk with his captain, and the two came to the conclusion that the Arab Prince might be of use to them.

Let me tell you a little more about this Sultan. He had a whole string of names, by the way, most difficult for even a Welshman to pronounce. We may be content to call him Ben Ali, for simplicity is always best. When Ben was a boy, then, his home had been the great palace of Lamoo—a semi-savage sort of city, some miles inland and right on the equator. The Sultan who reigned here was brother to the somewhat more powerful Mahomedan ruler at Zanzibar. The education of the young Prince, Ben Ali, had been entrusted chiefly to a scion of the Prophet, a very reverend-looking seignor, with a gilded turban, a white, flowing beard, a glittering eye or two, and a long and voluminous green toga. Before entering the young Prince's presence he used to kick off his sandals and leave them outside the door; but he never took off his turban. Ben Ali had to do sums on a slate, just as our own gutter-snipes do at board schools; only Ben's slate was the shoulder-blade bone of a camel, on which it is said the Prophet himself had ridden. Well, he did sums, and he learned Sanscrit, and was taught political economy. Moreover, he was given to understand that the Mahomedan religion was the only true one, and that it would in time rule the world—as soon, that is, as the Mahomedans themselves should spread themselves and conquer all races beneath the sun—which is very likely.

Ben Ali was taught astronomy, too. The earth was flat, like a wooden pot-lid; the stars were diamonds; the sun a fiery shield, which every night when it set was hauled in a golden chariot by angel-steeds round to the East, to be ready to rise by six o'clock in the morning. The scion of the Prophet assured him that even the infidel British were the scum of the earth; but that, as the devil gave them great wealth of gold and silver, it was policy to be civil to them, and to continue so until the great day of wrath came, and Mahomedans swept them into the sea.

When, therefore, Ben Ali found himself Sultan of Johanna, with a fine palace of his own, a fierce soldiery, and a harem, he considered himself of no small account. But he was very magnanimous. He whipped off a head or two every week, however, just by way of maintaining his dignity. The heads belonged to his own people, because these were more easily got at than his enemies. But he would graciously permit Consul Cummings to squat on the other side of the island so long as he behaved himself. Nay, more, he even invited the Consul to a dinner of herbs now and then, slimy fish, stewed flower petals, and sherbet (a kind of flavoured syrup).

Now Ben Ali was wealthy, in a way of speaking. For on the sly he did much traffic in slaves, and his splendid fleet of dhows was spread all over the ocean, 'twixt India and the Comoro Islands.

The captain and commander were having tiffin together at the consulate. Cummings himself was far away on his estate, and the ladies were all in the woods with a covey of middies, catching butterflies—though, 'twixt you and me and the binnacle, reader, they themselves were the biggest butterflies afloat. There were only the black servants here to-day—great hulking negroes to carry the viands in and out on silver trays, and little laughing black girls behind the officers' chairs to fan them.

The fish was excellent, the curry a glorious work of art, and the wine was the Consul's best.

"This Ben Ali, then," said Captain Bullard, "you would make of service to us?"

"Yes; nothing is more simple or easy, sir. He has a splendid lot of dhows, he is fond of money, so I propose that we should hire these dhows and pay well for them."

"According to results, of course?"

"Certainly, according to the information they bring us concerning French and Russian ships of war, and where they can be found."

"We ought," he added, "to pay Ben Ali, and to make presents to the captains of his dhows. I should hire, if possible, thirty or forty of Ben Ali's fleetest dhows. This would be my naval detective fleet, and with our two splendid cruisers, I think we shall make short work of every enemy's ship we meet."

"Thank goodness, sir, we have shells and ammunition of all sorts enough to last us for a couple of years, even if we were to fight a battle every fortnight."

"Good!" said Bullard. "Well, shall we run round with our ships and show off our strength?"

"I wouldn't do that at first, sir. These Arab Sultans need to be approached with tact, stroked with the hair, not against; buttered and blarneyed and praised, and—tipped."

"Good, Capel, good! I'll leave the matter in your hands, and right glad am I to have so clever a commander. So now I think we'll go on board, unless you mean to wait for the ladies."

"No, no," said Capel, laughing; "duty first—pleasure afterwards. The ladies can wait."

CHAPTER XII.

HOW TALBOT DIED.

"MR. MERRIDALE would like to see you for a moment, sir."

Commander Capel was in his own cabin, and it was the sentry who brought the message.

"Certainly. Let him come in."

"Oh, sir!" said Merridale, with a flutter of excitement, "I hear you are going to have the *Majuba* re-christened, and that one of the Misses Cummings is to perform the ceremony. Would you, sir, oh, *would* you let it be Aggie, the youngest? She is——"

"Well, what is she? Your sweetheart? Eh?"

"Not that so much, sir, but—er—well—I like her a little, and—but she is so beautiful!"

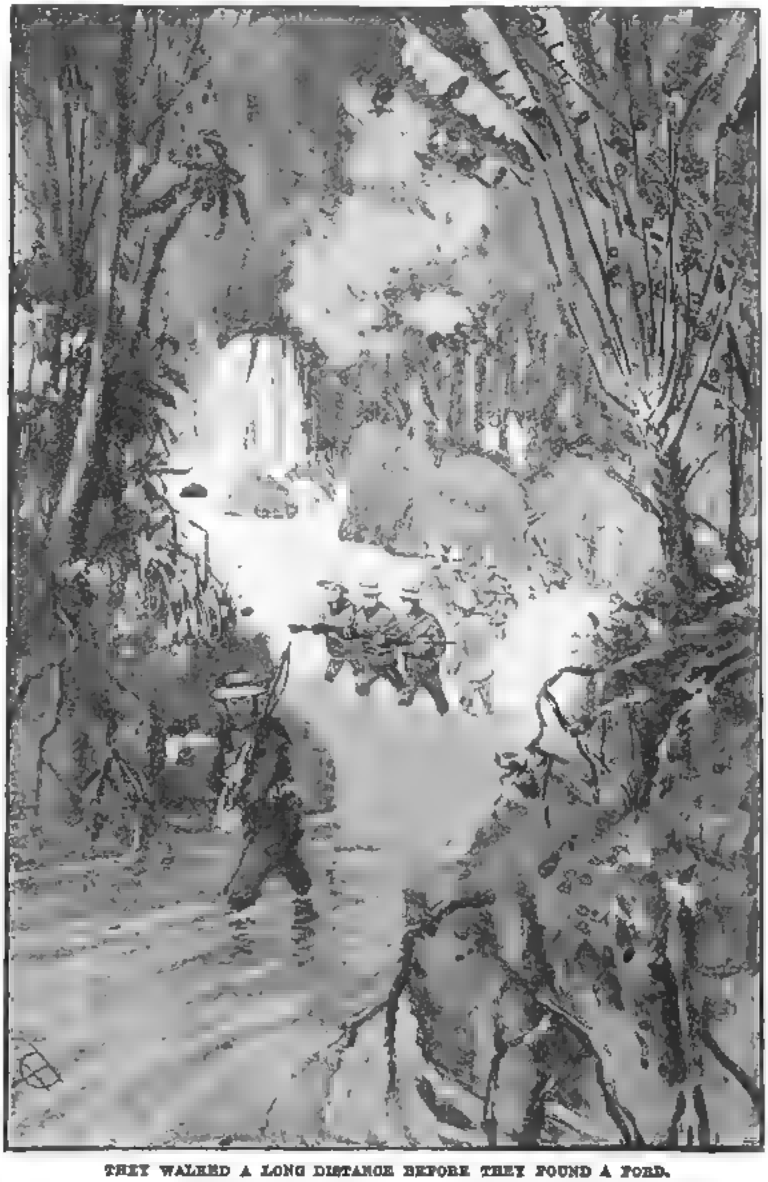
"All right, my lad," said Capel, laughing, "it shall be as you say. And you can go on shore this afternoon and tell her."

"Oh, thank you, thank you!" and off ran this love-sick midshipmite, exultant and flushed.

The boy would not wait for the officer's boat. He must hail an out-rigger dug-out belonging to a savage, and got landed all right. He ran nearly all the way to the Consulate, and was lucky enough to find Aggie alone. She was a really pretty young girl, and after getting such good news she couldn't well refuse our middy the kiss he begged for.

Well, that ceremony—the re-christening of the ship I mean—was a very interesting one. Aggie, most charmingly dressed in white, and garlanded as to her bonnie black hair with rare and lovely wild flowers, stood on board the electric pinnace, right under the bows of the great cruiser, with Merridale by her side, and the chief wardroom and gunroom officers, in swords and cocked hats, behind. The French *Majuba*, when the little bottle of wine that hung from her bows was lifted and let go again by Aggie's wee white fingers, became H.M.S. *Ocean Prince*.

A dance was given on board that same afternoon, and a dinner followed. Then, next day, a little expedition started away over the hills with a letter to Ben Ali, and many beautiful presents besides.



THEY WALKED A LONG DISTANCE BEFORE THEY FOUND A FORD.

The party was quite a representative one. Capel could not spare a lieutenant, but a sub went in command, as well as one of the marine lieutenants, with about a score of marines; then there was Merridale himself, Tom Harris, many blue-jackets—among the number being Jack Howard—

the captain's splendid Newfoundland, and last, and almost least, little Bobby Blair.

The Consul had provided provisions and bearers, and these semi-slaves carried also the presents for Ben Ali.

They went singing away up through the forest and over the hills, as happy-go-lucky a lot of sailor-hearties as anyone ever clapped eyes upon.

Indeed, I fear that the invasion of Britain did not trouble them very much. If they spoke of it at all to each other it was to pooh-pooh the matter, or laughingly to wonder however the French and Russians would get back to their own countries, "that is," said Merridale, "if any of them live long enough to wish to return."

They camped on a wooded hill-top about one o'clock, fires were lit, and as jolly a meal was cooked as any wanderer could wish to squat beside.

It seems to me that after this our brave company of seafarers resolved itself into a kind of free and easy picnic, and the sun had already begun to decline in the west before Sub-Lieutenant Scott started up and gave the orders to fall in once more.

Now, somehow or other, late in the afternoon they contrived to lose themselves. I believe it was the marine officer's fault.

Talbot—the sea-soldier—said to the sub, "The town of Johanna lies right down yonder, and we can easily take a cross-cut and reach it before sun-down."

"I don't care to leave the beaten track," replied the sub, "but it does look as if we could get right down on it your way, Talbot."

"Oh, I am sure we can!"

"Well, lead on."

The bother of it was, that a deep ravine with a stream running through it came awkwardly in the way. They walked a long distance up before they found a ford, and after this they had to climb a mountain in order to find out where they were in particular. Well, they could see the ocean bright and beautiful, on the east and west and south, but the town had succeeded in spiriting itself away, and the sun was making haste to go down.

"How annoying!" said the sub. "It's your fault, Talbot."

"Nonsense!" cried Talbot.

"I say, you fellows," said Merridale, "don't quarrel. It's stupid. Just let us light a fire and have supper and a sleep."

"I daresay Merridale is right," said Talbot.

So the sub threw his sword-belt and sword on the ground with a rattle, and lay down beside them.

The sub was not altogether pleased, but a good feed soon set everybody to rights, and they determined to spend the evening in spinning yarns, in conversation and in song. No difficult thing to do where so merry a band of sea-rovers as this is seated round the camp fire.

An allowance of grog was served out to the men; then sentries were set in the bush all round, and, this being done, pipes were quickly in full blast, and the jollity became general.

Although the yarns spun to-night were many of them highly amusing, and some full of adventures, I have not the slightest intention of inflicting my readers therewith. If I did I should be guilty of the unpardonable sin of digression. But I want to disabuse your minds of the prevalent notion that sailors and soldiers around the camp fires spin yarns to order, as it were.

I have camped in every clime under the sun, and in one where in winter there is no sun at all, but never yet have I heard such expressions as, "Now tell us a story, Tommy," or "Spin us a whopper, Jack." Yet you read of this in books. A really happy night around a camp fire is such a one as our mariners and bluejackets spent to-night, because it is natural. A song may now and then be called for, but anecdotes bubble up spontaneously, and the one leads on to the other in the jolliest way conceivable.

But it began to get late at last, and the fire burned low. It was speedily replenished and banked for the night. Then the marine officer went to have a look at his sentries, and returning, gave his sergeant orders to relieve them at twelve o'clock and again at four, if he himself should not be stirring; for sentry-go is nearly always considered a duty to devolve upon the marines, when there are any.

"Good night, Talbot, old man," said the sub. "Good night, Merridale—good night all."

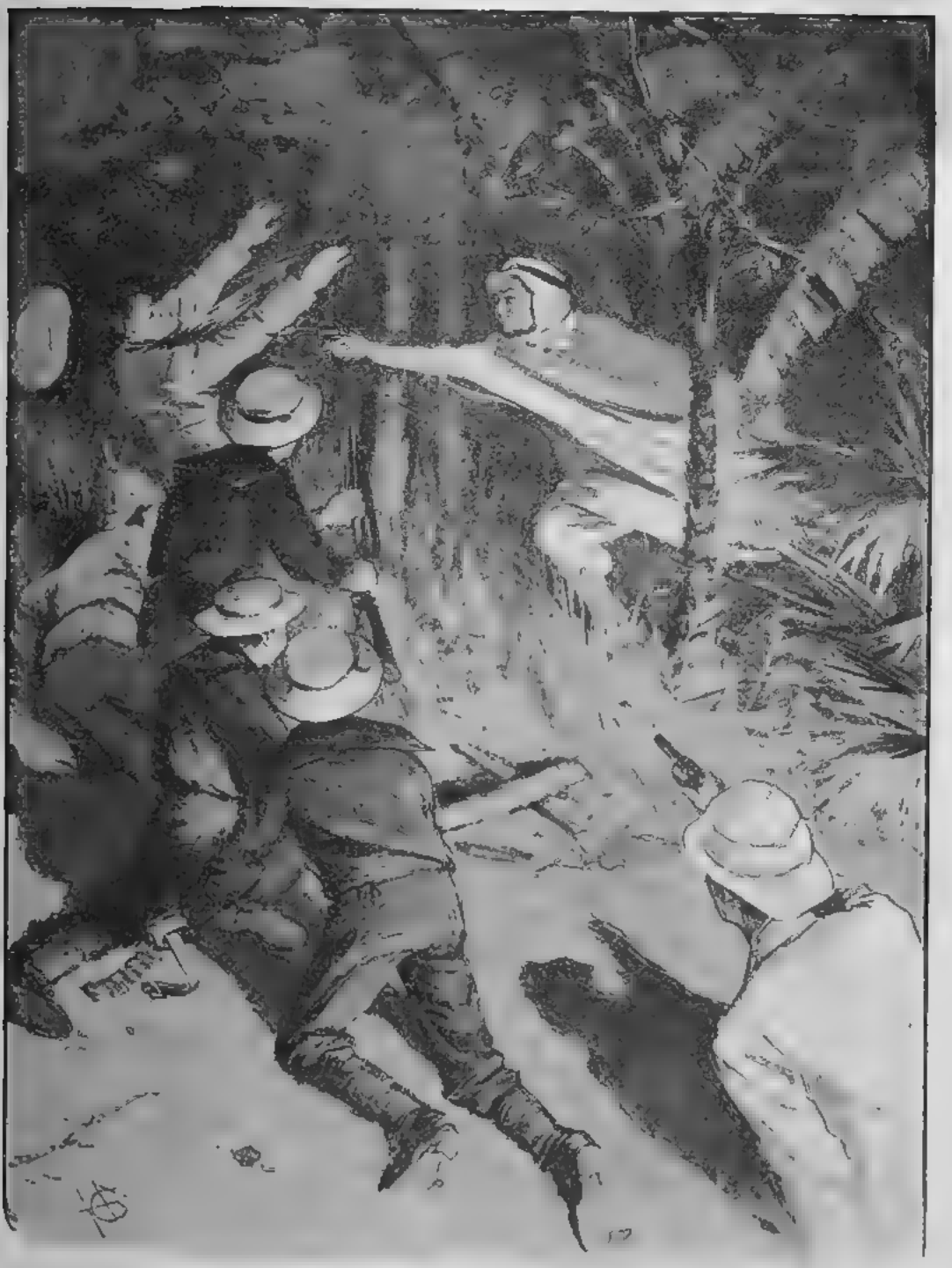
"Good night, my boy," answered Talbot cheerily. "Good night all—and all's well."

"Mind what I said about the sentries, sergeant," he added presently, "if I don't stir."

There were many around the camp fire who would never forget poor Talbot's last words—for indeed they were the very last he ever uttered in this world.

Everybody curled up now, and was soon fast enough asleep, and some among them were probably dreaming of home. Merridale had gone to sleep thinking of Aggie, and he hoped to dream about her. He did nothing of the sort, however; for dreams won't be coaxed to come, and can't be made to order.

The night wore away: there was scarcely a sound to be heard, although the sentries were all on the alert, for wandering Arabs are ever ready to injure an Englishman if they can get a chance. Now and then a branch would break with a snap down through the forest somewhere,



OUT DASHED A TALL FIGURE IN ARAB COSTUME.

or a wild bird would utter a nightmare shriek, or some great black creature would half leap, half fly from one tree toan other—the flying "foxes'—all else was silent. About four bells in the middle watch the moon sailed up over the sea, and the sentries drew back into the shade, for the light it gave was almost as bright as day.

Now "Sea King," the captain's Newfoundland, had a *penchant* for hunting on his own hook when on shore at night, and before curling up Merridale had fastened him with a rope and clove-hitch to a stump near by.

It wanted about twenty minutes to four, when all hands were suddenly awakened by a growl from the great dog, which lengthened into a fierce and terrible shriek.

Everyone was on his feet in a moment, just as one of the sentries' rifles awakened the woodland echoes.

These were followed almost immediately by the cracking of a revolver. Six times in quick succession it was fired; then, right through the very centre of the camp, dashed a tall figure in Arab costume, and disappeared next minute in the depths of the forest.

Talbot had been shot dead at once. He fell and never moved again; a bullet passed through the shoulder of the sub-lieutenant's coat, and another had grazed Merridale's chest. But for the dog, undoubtedly all three would have been shot in their sleep; on the other hand, had the Newfoundland been free, the assassin could not have left the camp alive.

The sentry who fired had seen the murderer's face; so had one other man, and so had Bobby Blair. *It was Louis mon Brave, without a doubt!*

No one thought of sleeping more to-night, and when daylight came at last, breakfast was eaten almost in silence; then a litter was formed and six men were told off to carry the body of poor Talbot back to the ship, while the rest of the band resumed their journey.

They made the town that same forenoon, just in time to see a swift dhow in the offing, her great square sail bellying out before the wind.

Mr. Scott brought his marine glasses to bear upon it, and lo!—yonder on its high stern quarter a figure could be seen waving a handkerchief shorewards.

It was the spy himself!

And now this fiend in human form commenced to semaphore in derision. His body stood darkling out against the dhow's sail, and his signals could easily be read.

"Good-bye, old shippies!" he semaphored; "but remember this—we'll meet again!"

Jack Howard shook his clenched fist after the fast receding dhow. "Ay!" he cried, "Heaven grant it! I'll be waiting for you!"

But duty had to be done in spite of grief and chagrin, and in less than an hour's time the sub-lieutenant and Merridale found themselves in the presence of the Sultan of Johanna.

Their reception was all that could be expected, and the marines and bluejackets were feasted and *fêted* quite as much as their masters.

The visit of the ships to the offing, the Sultan told Mr. Scott, would be hailed with delight, and that of the great British officers and heroes to his humble palace. Whatever he could do to help them to beat the French he would. "Was it not," he said, "the accursed French who, many years ago, had landed at Mayotta, dethroned the Sultan, insulted his harem, and turned his children into beggars and wanderers to and fro on the face of the earth?"

"Pity," he added, "that they had not come but a little hour sooner, for in one of his fleetest dhows a great English milord had just sailed for Zanzibar. He, too, had promised him much money and much fine presents on his return."

"That man," cried the sub-lieutenant, "that villain, your sublime Highness, is no Briton, but French! Had we been here we should have captured him and hanged him on the nearest tree."

Then the Sultan was told all the story, and his large liquid eyes grew larger when informed that if he could make Louis mon Brave a prisoner when he returned, £5,000 should be his reward.

In three days more the British men-o'-war, including even the *Tadpole*, lay off Johanna, and Commander Capel had arranged for the hire of five-and-twenty of the Sultans fleetest dhows to scour the seas from north to south, and bring news of the Frenchman's movements to Captain Bullard, who with his ships would be cruising on and off the coast of Madagascar. Each dhow was to carry while at sea a red pennant at its mast head, so that they should know each other and communicate wherever they met.

The Sultan was now an ally of Britain, he had sworn by his Faith to be true, and well did Capel know that an Arab can be either a true friend or a very bitter foe.

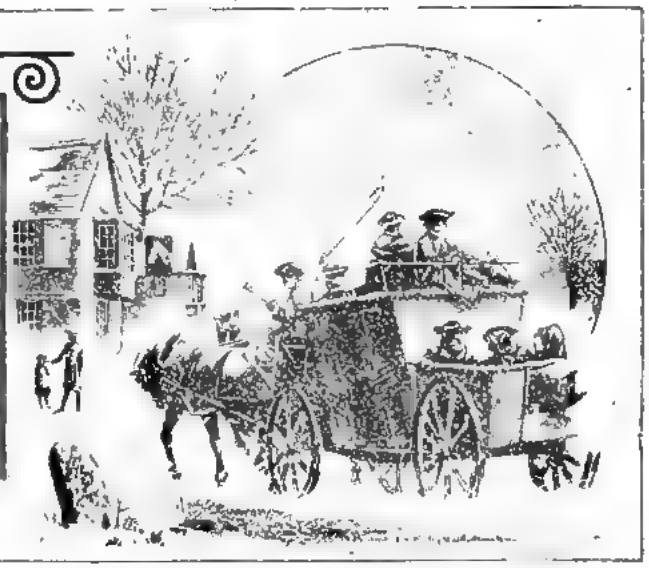
But now hurrah! Once more for the open sea—there's a world of adventure yet before us.

(To be continued.) Louis Stables

IN THE COACHING DAYS

BY

W. J. Dexter.



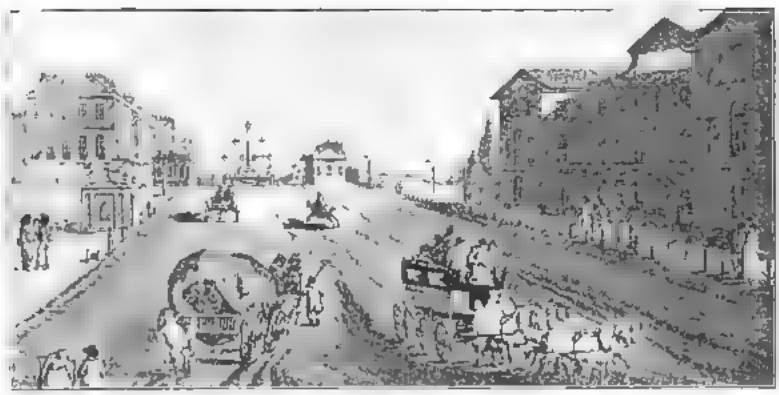
NOW in the days of sixty-miles-an-hour expresses, of which THE CAPTAIN's readers have already been very well informed, it is interesting, not to say instructive, to look back upon the manner in which the people of these islands travelled prior to the opening of the Stockton & Darlington Railway in 1825. It was by the coach that the people then travelled, and of the story of that means of locomotion we intend to say a few words in the present article.

Stow, that great historian, tells us that coaches were first introduced into England in 1564 by a Dutchman, who was appointed by Queen Elizabeth to be her coachman. And so royalty, setting the fashion in coaches, as they do in most other things, the coach became an established and general means of conveyance.

To look back now on those days, we are inclined to think, and rightly so, that the coach was an exceedingly slow method of travelling; but it must be remembered that its introduction was one step forward in the right direction, and that it was the beginning of a regular communication being set up between all large centres—a communication which since, by the aid of the steam engine, has been so developed, until, at the present time, there is not a town or village of importance which has not a frequent and regular communication with all the large cities and towns.

As we have said, the coach was introduced in 1564; but it was not until nearly a century later that the stage-coach, plying between all the large towns, made its appearance. Until then, the coach was a private conveyance only. It is the public or stage-coach that we intend

AN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY STAGE-COACH.



AN ENTRANCE TO LONDON IN 1796—HYDE PARK CORNER WITH TURNPIKE GATES.
From an old print.

to deal with here, and so we will confine ourselves strictly to it.

In a work, entitled "Her Majesty's Mails," we are informed that :—

A kind of stage-coach was first used in London in 1608; towards the middle of the century they were gradually adopted in the metropolis and on the better highways around London. In no case whatever did they attempt to travel at a greater speed than three miles an hour. Before the century closed stage-coaches were placed on three or four of the principal roads in the kingdom, namely, those between London and York, Chester and Exeter

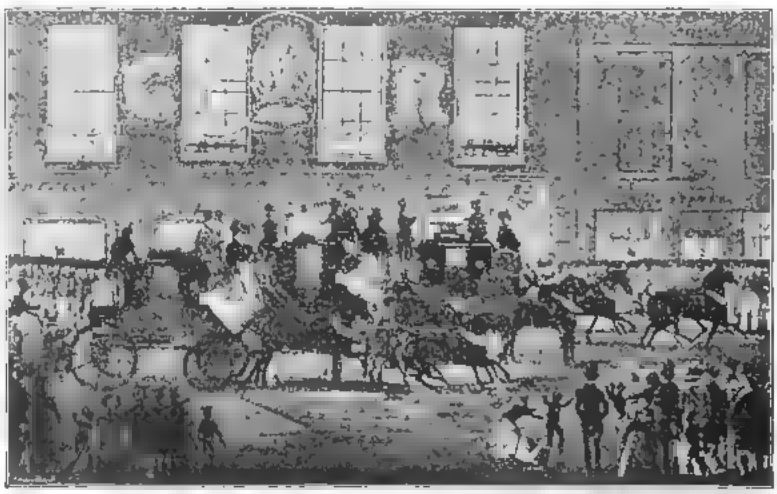
The following is an early announcement of a London-York stage-coach :—

On 18th April, 1703, persons who desire to make the journey from London to York, or from York to London, are, requested to present themselves at the "Black Swan," in Holborn, London; or, at Coney Street, in York. They will find there a diligence, which leaves on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and accomplishes the entire journey in four days, if God permit.

The above two extracts speak for themselves, but we would draw our reader's attention to the rate of speed—three miles an hour—and the journey from London to York, four days.

A journey by the coach in those days was a great venture. As the coach from London very often left in the small hours of the morning, it was essential that the would-be traveller should catch it, for, unlike the present system of railways, there was not another coach in half an hour; the next coach left, perhaps, in three days, and more often a week elapsed. To avoid this terribly great inconvenience, intending passengers took up their position the night before at the inn from which the coach started, and gave strict instructions to the "boots" to call them in good time. And woe betide the hapless "boots" if he erred in his commission and knocked not loudly enough upon the bed-room door. All the coaches started from an inn, and this was the beginning of those famous London coaching inns which one so often reads about, and which, alas! are now no more. Charles Dickens loved to write about them—"The Tabard" and "The White Hart," those famous Southwark hostelries, have been immortalized by him; and those of you who have read "The Pickwick Papers" (and who has not?) will remember the latter as the inn at which the famous and never-to-be-forgotten Sam Weller first put in his appearance.

Much of the discomfort of stage-coach travelling was due to the bad state of the roads. Many of them were no more than bridle-paths, and notwithstanding the fees levied by the turnpikes, which fees were supposed to contribute toward the repair of the roads, the roads were seldom, if ever, attended to. Many a time had the passengers to alight and walk a mile or two because of floods, and on this account it was not unusual for passengers to remain for days at some town *en route*, waiting for the waters to subside. Of course, the roads did not always



MAIL COACHES LEAVING THE "ANGEL," ISLINGTON, ON GEORGE III.'S BIRTHDAY (1812).

continue to be in this bad state. The middle of the eighteenth century saw a great improvement made in their condition, and with it, as a natural consequence, an increase in the speed of the coaches. The recognized speed of mail coaches was three miles an hour, for the agreement of the Government for the carriage of the mails between Bristol and Exeter—a distance of sixty-five miles—was that the journey should be completed in twenty-four hours. This meant an average speed of a little more than two and a half miles per hour, not accounting for stoppages. But, with the entry of the last century, all this was altered. The country demanded an alteration, and they got it! Thenceforth, fifty to sixty miles were covered in the day; no one travelling at night.

The outside seats of a coach were, early in the days of the stage-coach, not the coveted places they became later on, the reason for this being that no provision was made for the outside passenger in the shape of seats (see our first illustration.) The following account of a coach ride, written by a Prussian clergyman, is extremely interesting, and tends to bear out the above statement.

The coach drove from the yard. The inside passengers got in there; but we who chose to ride outside were obliged to clamber up in the street, because there was no room for us to pass under the gateway. They have a curious way of riding, not in, but upon a coach. He who can properly balance himself rides not incommodiously on the outside, and in summer time, in fine weather, it certainly is more pleasant than within, excepting that the company is rather of a low order, and the dust troublesome. The getting up on to the top was alone the risk of one's life, and I was obliged to sit just at the corner of the coach, with nothing to hold on by but a sort of handle fastened to the side. I sat nearest the wheel, and the moment we set off, I fancied I saw a certain death awaiting me. All I could do was to take a still firmer hold of the handle and to be the more and more careful to preserve my balance.

MAIL COACHES AT THE "SWAN WITH TWO NECKS," LUD LANE, 1800.

The reverend gentleman then goes on to say now he found that his position soon became insupportable, and so he scrambled into the "basket" in which the luggage was carried. This was all right whilst going up hill, but as soon as the coach started off on a decline at a fairly good pace—

then all the trunks and packages and everything in the basket began to dance around me, and every moment I received such awful blows that I thought my last hour was come. I was obliged to suffer the torture a whole hour, till we came to another hill, when, quite shaken to pieces and badly bruised, I crept to the top of the coach and took my former seat.

The narrative concludes with the following piece of advice:—

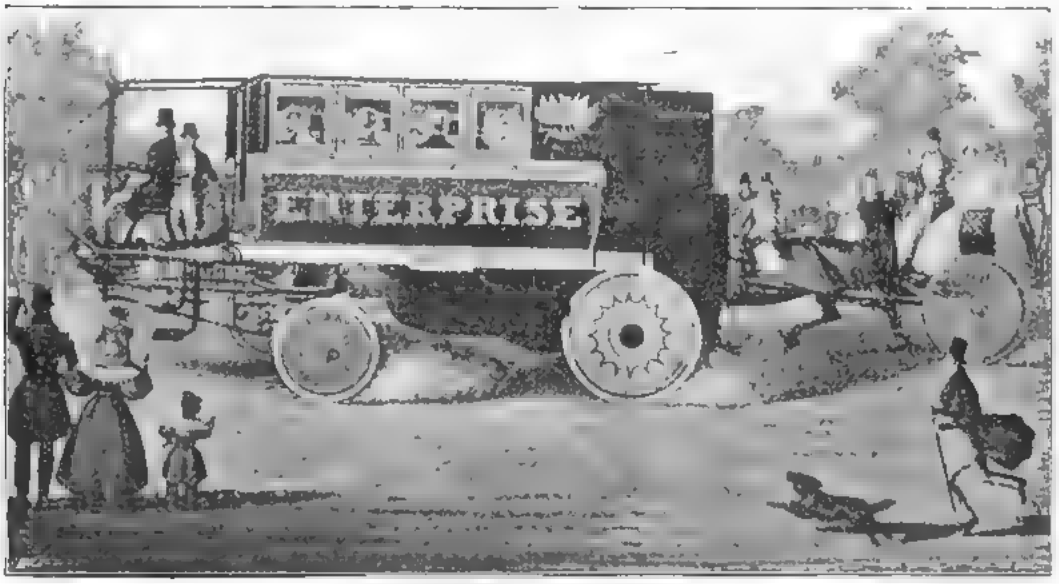
I now write this as a warning to all strangers not to take a place on the outside of an English post-chaise, and still more, a place in the basket.

Thus you will see that the outside seat was once

Where Dick Turpin used to hide

THE EX-COACHMAN'S LAMENT.

not the most enviable position. Certainly, one fond of the fresh air would put up with no little inconvenience rather than be seated in a small, stuffy compartment for several hours on a hot summer's day. Later on, however, proper accommodation was afforded to the outside passenger, and this became such a favourite position that very soon an extra price was demanded for the outside seats—the box-seats in particular. An amusing story is told of the coach running between Edinburgh and Berwick. A passenger complained bitterly that the cushion on which he sat was wet. It appears that there was a hole in the roof, and through it the rain was pouring copiously. The passenger called the guard, and in great wrath reproached him.



THE "ENTERPRISE" STEAM OMNIBUS.

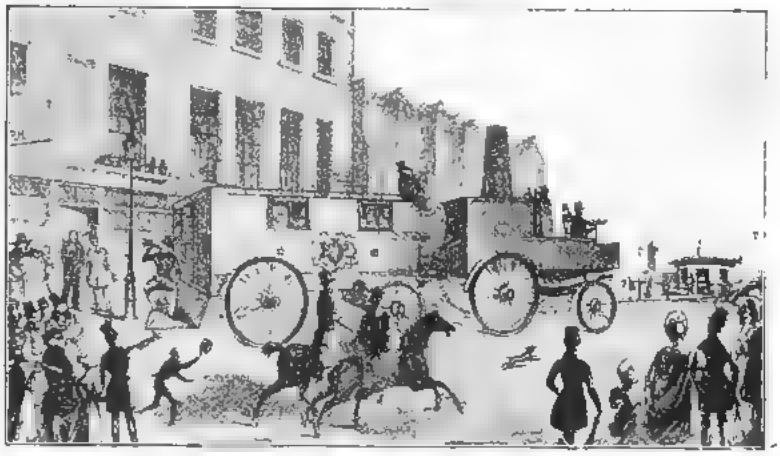
Built by Mr. Walter Hancock, of Stratford, for the London & Paddington Steam Carriage Co.

All the satisfaction he got, however, was the quiet and typical Scotch reply: "Ay, mony a ane has compleened a' *that* hole."

For nearly a century and a half the "stage coach" crawléd over the turnpikes—we say "crawled" with intention, as five or six miles an hour was no pace at all! Improvement in speed came but slowly; but the prime mover in the really great improvement was Major John Palmer, M.P. for Bath, son-in-law to the Duke of Richmond. His idea was for shorter stages and lighter vehicles; short stages of ten miles, then a change of horses; vehicles holding three outside and four in, in place of a dozen inside and eight out, as was previously the custom. It was in 1783 that John Palmer put his ideas before Parliament, and offered to convey the mails—which until then were entrusted to a boy on horseback—and on August 2nd, 1784, Palmer's first coach started from London at eight o'clock in the morning, and reached Bristol at eleven o'clock the same night—a truly wonderful performance for the times. Major Palmer's scheme prospered, and when railway lines were being laid down, some 700 of these "fast coaches" were running over England. The Edinburgh coach ran its 400 miles in forty hours; the Exeter coach its 173 miles in twenty hours; Holyhead, 251 miles in twenty-seven hours. These times, it may be mentioned, were just about half of what had been required to perform the same journey previously. One of the great causes of this increased speed was the efforts made by Messrs. Telford & Macadam, whose system of road making was adopted by the Government. To the roads made by Macadam his name has ever been associated, and we use the term, "macadamized" roads, to this day.

We must not omit, in this short article on the coach, some mention of the highwayman, so often a character in fiction. He was the great danger of coach travelling. It is said that in one week during 1720 all the coaches entering London from the Surrey roads were held up and robbed. The driver and guard armed themselves against such intruders, and used their weapons on the slightest provocation, and often where not at all needed. It is generally said to be a fact that the innkeepers, to a great extent, aided the highwaymen, and offered them shelter when run down. An example may be given in the "Green Man," near Hounslow, a famous haunt of Dick Turpin. The fireplace, of which we give an illustration, is very old and peculiar. Just at the back of the grate—the the position is marked with a cross in our sketch—there is an entrance to a long, narrow passage, running the whole length of the stove, and in it several men could be hidden with safety. It is said that Dick Turpin very often made good use of this secret hiding place.

All this has now been changed, for although there are a few coaches still to be seen on the road, yet the coachman is now no longer called upon to "stand and deliver," as in the days of yore. The steam engine has become an accomplished fact, and has ousted the coach from its proud position as "King of the Road."



SIR CHARLES DANCE'S STEAM CARRIAGE.

The old driver is no more, and the younger branch of men went with the times and secured posts on the railways. People soon began to see the advantages offered by the "iron horse" over that of flesh and blood, and were ready to accept them. Efforts, however, were made to combine the two. The Stockton & Darlington Railway had not been opened two years before the London & Paddington Steam Omnibus Co. was formed, and several steam 'buses were placed on the road. These may well be considered the fathers of the present motor-car.

Our last illustration is of a steam coach, put on the roads early in the century by Sir Charles Dance.

These steam coaches and omnibuses did not last long. Parliament repealed all their favourable laws regarding them, and by 1834 all steam carriages were forced from the road, and the new law regarding them was not put in force until 1896.

Illustrated by J. Littler

THE weather was the very thing for our purpose—which was a trip in the ice yacht, and we were happy in the anticipation of a perfect run: for not only was the ice smooth and strong all over the Gulf of Finland, which was to be our sailing field, but there had not been a particle of snow as yet, though December was already in, and, moreover, a glorious breeze blew strong from the south-east—a breeze that would carry us along, barring accidents, at a rate of thirty miles an hour, or perhaps more.

There were three of us—Goodwyn, Macpherson, and I; of the trio, Goodwyn was owner of the craft, Mac. and I being guests. Goodwyn knew all about ice-boating; we others had never experienced this form of entertainment, though, judging from the descriptions of our friend and host, we were entirely agreed that it must be most exhilarating and delightful.

We were to be out, if possible, for two days landing at Cronstadt, or Wiborg, or anywhere we happened to be, for the night, and trusting to our lucky stars to find sleeping accommodation. This was our intention. In ice-boating, however, there is a longer chapter of accidents to be taken into account than in any other form of sport it has been my lot to essay, and things on this occasion did not turn out in strict conformity with the plans we had laid down.

All three of us were in high spirits as we drove down very early that dark and blowsy morning to the Boat Club at St. Petersburg, where Goodwyn kept his ice-boat; we were going, Goodwyn said, to have the grandest time that ever ice-yachtsmen spent.

I confess that I had never seen an ice-yacht before this morning, and was not prepossessed by the appearance of the craft. It was an ugly skeletony-looking thing, as Mac. described it. Simply a mast set up in the middle of a kind of triangular platform of plain white wood. At each corner of the triangle the structure stood upon a skate of steel, fixed into a block of oak of unusual thickness and strength. The skate at the point of the triangle was movable, and acted as a rudder, being worked by a tiller from the deck. The other two skates were fixtures, one at each corner of the base. The triangle moved base foremost.

"Wait a bit, though," said Mac. "Where are we to sit?"

"You've got to stand, man!" said Goodwyn.

"Hang it, I expect to be able to stick on, at least," said Macpherson. "There's hardly foothold there for a cat. I suppose we have to cling like grim death to the shrouds when the ship goes about?"

"Well, you'd better, certainly," Goodwyn laughed; "you'll have a new experience if you don't—that of a shooting star."

"How fast do we go?" I asked. I, too, had scarcely realized that one had to cling for dear life to some rope and stand all day, dodging the boom at intervals.

"Forty miles an hour, I hope, with this wind," said Goodwyn.

"We're in for it, Tom," murmured Mac., and I, being Tom, cordially agreed.

However, all discomfort was presently forgotten. The wind blew straight out of the mouth of the river and into the wide and open gulf. Goodwyn hoisted the sail and took the tiller.

"Now, be quick! Climb on, and stick there for all you're worth," he said, "and be ready to shift at an instant's notice, or——"

There was no time to listen to the end of Goodwyn's warning, for positively, almost before we could cling on, anyhow, to the side of the ship, the

rascally thing was off, and off so fast that one's breath went by the board, and one wondered whether the vessel had got out of hand at the very start and something awful was going to happen.

Like an arrow from the bow we shot through the air, skimming over the ice at the speed of an express train. You would never believe one could travel so fast until you tried this way. "Is it all right, Goodwyn?" I gasped.

"All right!—very much so; couldn't possibly be better!" he sang out. "Aren't we going fast enough for you? It's forty miles an hour, my boy, this is!"

We were in the gulf by this time, and the gilded churches and stuccoed buildings of St. Petersburg were being left rapidly behind us.

Gradually the first sense of breathlessness and scare passed away, and I began to feel, I imagined, as a bird does—a carrier pigeon, for instance—flying through space. A perfectly delightful feeling of exhilaration began to creep over my heart. I had never felt the joy of perfect motion till now. "Mac.," I shouted, "isn't this simply superb?"

Mac. cheered aloud in his joy, letting go with one hand in order to wave it over his head.

At that moment Goodwyn sang out: "'Bout ship!"

Round suddenly swung the little craft, and the boom came travelling across. Goodwyn shouted something that I did not hear. I clung on madly, ducking for the boom just in time, and with difficulty keeping the precarious position in which I half lay, half sat.

But Mac. happened to be waving one arm, as described; thus he was caught napping, and the result was tragedy for him; comedy—not to say screaming farce—for us.

Away flew Mac., detached suddenly, as the ship twisted about; he flew in one direction, while the yacht whizzed away in the other. He alighted in a sitting posture, and in that position he travelled over the ice at, I should say, about 100 miles an hour for a distance of about 50yds. to 100yds. I should not like to say how many times he spun round and round upon his own axis within that distance. A top is a poor spinner in comparison with Mac.'s performance that morning. Gradually he slowed down and stopped, and Goodwyn having deftly turned the ship into the wind's eye, we waited for him.

Macpherson was not hurt; but he wanted to know several things—as, for instance, why on earth Goodwyn did "that"?

"Did what?" asked Goodwyn, suppressing a certain portion of his desire to laugh, but not much of it.

"Why didn't you say you were going to play that foolish game?" Mac. explained. "How did you expect me to stick on when you twisted round like a tectotum?"

"Well, *we* stuck on," said Goodwyn. "I warned you; I shouted ''Bout ship!' What more could I do?"

"Well, can't you do ''bout ship!' less suddenly and violently?"

"My good chap, there's a great crevice with open water a quarter of a mile farther on; we should have been in it in a second," laughed Goodwyn; "you're better off than if you'd been chucked in there!"

"I don't see that I need be chucked anywhere," said Mac.; "it hurts so, and it's such giddy work."

At this point Mac. recovered his good humour, and we all laughed together for five minutes before we were sufficiently recovered to make a start.

"Be gentle with us next time," Mac. entreated, and Goodwyn promised to do his best.

Talk of the delights of flying! No bird, I am sure, would have had a look in with us that afternoon, for simple speed; we could have given points to a carrier pigeon.

And then the appetite that comes along with all this whizzing through the keen, frozen air! Inconceivably large piles of sandwiches are made to look ridiculously small, and that in no time; take with you as much as you will, there is never enough to eat out ice-yachting. Well, it was while we lay-to for half an hour for lunch, somewhere in mid gulf, between Cronstadt and the Peterhof shore, that Mac. made the discovery which changed the character of our trip. We had preferred to sail backwards and forwards over the "home waters" rather than cruise right out to sea, beyond Cronstadt, because we found the ice farther seawards to be quite inferior for our purposes to the beautiful smooth stuff that stretched at our very feet, a glorious basin of twelve miles square or more, and we now lay-to and enjoyed our sandwiches some two miles from the Russian shore.

"There's a chap skating or running, away there by the land," said Mac. "Where can he be off to?"

"Across to Lachta, probably," said Goodwyn. "Unless he's going to Cronstadt."

"No—only out for exercise, I think," said I; "to give his dogs a run—look what a lot of them he's brought out."

"We'd give him a lift," said Goodwyn; "only his dogs would never keep up on our to-day's form."

"He seems to be getting over the ground fairly fast, too," said Goodwyn. "What's he doing, though? Look!"

I saw the man stop a moment, as though to rest

and take breath; then, he suddenly appeared to throw up his arms and start skating at a great pace towards us—the dogs following him, as before; five of them I now counted.

"He is making for us," I said; "going to ask for a lift, after all!"

We watched him come nearer. Within three or four minutes he was close enough for his actions to be seen in some detail. We heard him shouting to us, and observed him wave his arms excitedly.

The truth flashed upon each of us at about the same instant—*they were wolves!*

Now, I was very young and very inexperienced, and I must confess that this discovery filled me, at the first blush, with very serious alarm. I had not seen wolves before this, and I knew little of their ways. That we were about to be attacked in force I felt pretty certain. We might easily escape, of course, by dragging the ship round quickly, until the wind caught the sail, when we should be whirled in an instant out of danger; but then we must wait for the poor chap over there, with the wolves at his heels, and they might secure both him and us before we could get into motion again. Had I known anything of the ways of wolves, I need not have been afraid. The mangey rascals would, I know now, have no objection to following a single man, or even, if the weather were very cold and their stomachs very empty, to pulling him down, supposing them to have previously ascertained that he was unarmed, and that no other human beings were within a mile or two. But as for attacking three or four of us, they would never dream of such an enterprise. Those five wolves contented themselves with chasing their quarry to within 100yds. of our ship, when they stopped short and squatted down, allowing him to come right up and board us unmolested. The man was naturally agitated. He assured us that, but for our providential appearance in mid-ocean, he would certainly have been eaten; and I fancy he was about right.

"But meanwhile," said Goodwyn, with great appropriateness, "what's to be done?"

"Of course, there's no danger," he added hastily; perhaps—I hope not—but perhaps he observed signs of timidity in myself, or in Mac.; "we are perfectly safe, but couldn't we turn the situation to advantage? If only we had guns, now—but then, if we had, the wolves would never have come within shot."

Now that I had learned something of the ways of wolves, I appreciated the truth and wisdom of Goodwyn's remark.

"I'll tell you what," he continued, after a while, during which I watched those wolves, one of which was now howling in an appalling manner—I was by no means quite comfortable about them, even now—"we'll hunt the beggars up the Gulf and into the Neva—right up to St. Petersburg—and get them shot!"

"My good chap," exclaimed Mac., "that'd never do; why, they'd run about the streets and bite babies and nurses and things before they could be collared—that won't wash! Drive them about, hither and thither, if you like, while one of us lands at Strelna and telegraphs for—say, Gatesby or Acland."

"Well—that's not a bad idea!" said Goodwyn; "but I can't land, for I must manage the ship, and the fellow who lands will probably be chivvied by the wolves, remember that!"

Good gracious! thought anxious I; I only hope they won't choose me!

"I'll do the landing," said Mac.; "you can run me right in shore—there's no danger. First chase the wolves well out—say, a mile or two from land—then run me in quickly, set me ashore, and go back and keep the beggars moving."

I must say I admired Mac.'s pluck; for, though there did not seem much danger in the thing as he put it, yet the enterprise appeared to me to be one that would require considerable nerve. What if the wolves would not be driven, but insisted upon going where they chose? Nevertheless, I felt bound in very shame to offer to accompany old Mac., and did so—when he pointed out that he needed no companion, while my presence would be very valuable on board the yacht, in case we should run into cat-ice, or anything—"There's really no danger in my part of the business, old chap!" he ended. "After all, *I'm* leaving the wolves behind, and *you're* staying with them!" This argument was good for the soul—for my soul, at any rate.

So Mac. borrowed his skates from the man we had rescued, and we started driving those wolves into mid-gulf, by way of clearing the road before carrying Mac. shorewards.

But driving the wolves did not prove to be so easy an enterprise as we had expected. As a matter of fact, they would not be driven. As soon as the wind caught our sail the little ship darted past the five astonished creatures like a flash of lightning—a proceeding which startled them beyond measure; but the immediate effect was, that they squatted upon their haunches, and showed no inclination to budge.

"'Bout ship!" shouted Goodwyn, and round whizzled the little craft upon its own axis. Mac. and I were by this time accustomed to cling like flies on such occasions; but our refugee was not; hence that unfortunate person was now suddenly to be seen in a sitting posture on the ice, spinning round and round, and in full swing for the place in which the wolves sat and waited.

I think I have never seen anything quite so quickly done as the return of that Russian to the sanctuary of our yacht. The wolves did not dream of following him, yet he ran as though an entire "Natural History" book were in full chase, open-mouthed, after him. The poor fellow's nerves had been somewhat shattered by his former escape, and he must be forgiven the screams and cries which accompanied his rapid retreat on this occasion.

We endeavoured once more, having re-shipped our refugee, to set those five wolves travelling; but they were either too obstinate or too frightened to move; they would not, and there was an end.

"We must leave them here and run for shore," said Goodwyn; "probably they won't escape far meanwhile; but, however far they go, we'll catch them again easily enough."

So we headed for the shore, near the Monastery of Strelna, now distant about two miles, which distance we covered in between three and four minutes; the wolves actually, to our immense surprise, and the refugee's alarm, slowly following us.

Mac. stepped off the yacht within 50yds. of shore, quite close to the village. He knew, he said, where the telegraph office was, and would hurry up and wire to Gatesby and then return. "The wolves intend to hang about; you'll have no trouble in keeping them in sight," he said. Then we watched him reach the shore and start at a run for the village. The wolves, apparently, had other intentions, and did not hang about.

While we stood making final arrangements with Mac., they suddenly altered their course, and were now making off at full speed, at a tangent, heading at an angle which would bring them to the shore, if they were allowed to reach it, a mile from the spot where Mac. had landed, and just

HE SKATED RAPIDLY TOWARDS THE CRAVICE, ROSE TO IT LIKE A HUNTER, AND SHOT ACROSS THE OPEN WATER.

where a belt of pine forest ran almost down to the edge of the ice.

"Jove!" exclaimed Goodwyn, "that won't do; we shall lose them. Round with her, everyone—lend a hand, you, Mr. Roosky—shove—so! now, on board, all hands!"

In half a minute we were off and after the wolves, at a pace which would soon bring us between them and the land, cutting off their retreat.

Like a sun-ray the little craft sped. We were within 100yds. of them; somebody gave a cheer; in another second we should have cut them off, and our wolf hunt would have been saved to us when suddenly, "'Bout ship!" screamed Goodwyn

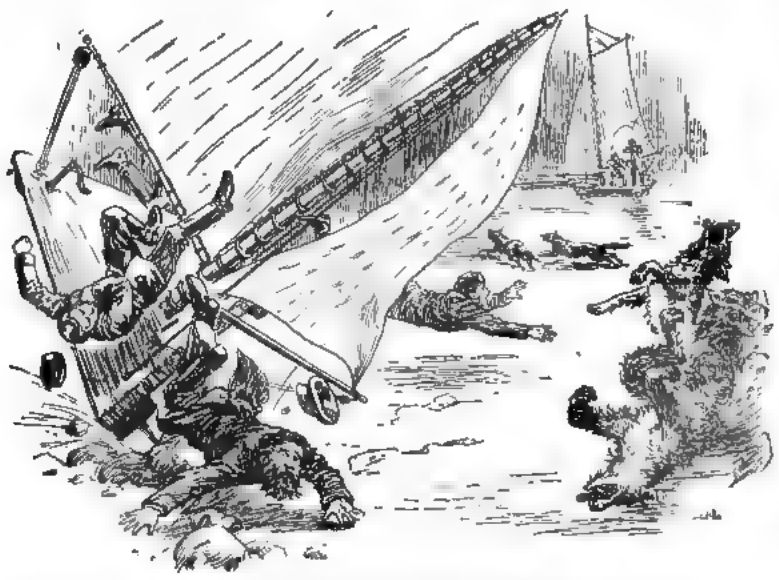
"cat-ice ahead!" Round the craft swished—we all three hung on this time—but it was too late; with a crunch and a crash, she ran two of her skates straight into the thin, weakly ice, and stuck fast.

"Out, all hands, and shove!" screamed Goodwyn—"quick!"

We did so—we shoved madly, desperately; we gave that up and pulled her backwards; we tried to force her sideways; and then, lastly, to lift her bodily from the ice; but it was useless.

Our skipper ground his teeth and eyed the vanishing wolves.

"Bad cess to them!" Goodwyn groaned at last; "that's all we shall see of *them* to-day. I wish we could stop Mac. telegraphing for Gatesby and the others; how they'll swear when they find they've been summoned for nothing."



MAC. AND THE REFUGEE HUSTLED TOGETHER, STRAIGHT OVER THE SHIP'S BOWS

It was too bad. We saw the wolves deliberately trot across the 100yds. or so of frozen morass land that divided the gulf and forest. At the edge of the wood they turned and looked back at us. I could have sworn they grinned and licked their lips; then they disappeared one by one among the trees; they did not hurry themselves.

When there was no more need of special haste, we moved the ship easily, of course; she came out of that cat-ice as though rollers had been laid down for her to run down.

"Of course," said Goodwyn, "things are always like that."

"At any rate," he added, "we'll sail about till Mac. comes back—no good moping here."

We enjoyed a few lovely bursts of sailing becoming quite absorbed in the delight of flying backwards and forwards in five-mile tacks, not one of which occupied more than 10mins.

After having flashed some six or seven times half across the gulf, as we were heading back again towards Strelna, we suddenly became aware of a somewhat agitating circumstance.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Goodwyn—"there's Mac. skating like fury towards us, and—yes—all five of the wolves after him."

It was perfectly true. We had been scudding in the opposite direction, and had not seen him; but there was Mac., and there were the wolves—nearly five miles away; he skating for all he was worth in our direction, and they galloping after him, just as they had pursued our brave Russian an hour or two before.

Naturally, with Mac. travelling fast towards us, and ourselves moving still faster towards him, the distance separating us diminished very rapidly, and in five minutes we knew that there was no danger—we were within a mile of him; the wolves a quarter of a mile behind him. But, suddenly, Mac. stopped dead.

"What's up—why has he stopped?" I murmured; and Goodwyn murmured back, that "Heaven only knew!"

In a few seconds, each of which carried us nearer to him, we saw what was the matter.

"A crevice, by George!" said Goodwyn—"and a wide one—10ft. if it's an inch—and those infernal brutes haven't stopped, though Mac. has. Mac must fly it, or we must!"

The wolves were still in full canter—did they actually intend to attack him?—surely not. Yet they still approached, and two of them were howling dismally, nose in air.

Then Mac. did a sporting thing. Before we had time to reach him, he skated rapidly towards the crevice, rose to it like a hunter, and shot the 10ft. of open water in the grandest style imaginable. It was a picture, and as our little ship went about, we cheered Mac. to the echo.

"Confound you! You might have waited for me!" was that hero's greeting. "I've brought

the wolves along with me," he added, "which is better luck than you deserve."

"This time we'll keep the brutes in hand!" said Goodwyn grimly; and for two long hours we kept them running, now this way, now that; but never allowing them to reach shore, or ourselves to run into cat-ice, till the unfortunate creatures must have been rendered desperate by our incomprehensible tactics. It was well on in the afternoon now, and we had begun to feel that Gatesby and the others, if they came at all, might arrive when it was too dark to shoot.

But, just as we were on the point of despairing, Mac. observed a spot on the horizon.

"If that were only *they*, coming along in Gatesby's ice-yacht!" he said.

The speck grew and grew, and in five minutes there was no longer any doubt that it was an ice-boat; it must certainly be Gatesby's.

The wolves were at this time weakly cantering hither and thither, just as we directed them, by darting this way and that, in front of or behind them.

"We'll drive the beggars straight towards Gatesby!" said old Goodwyn, radiant now, and full of excitement. Even the Russian refugee looked happy and confident for the first time to-day.

The wolves now perceived that their enemies had mysteriously multiplied, and that they were between two fires. They suddenly turned and darted shorewards. We darted after them, a point or so wide, in order to turn them. Round went the wolves. Now, if we could keep them straight, they must pass within easy shot of Gatesby's boat; it was an exciting moment.

Then, once more, there was a crunching and a sudden violent stoppage—we were in the cat-ice. Off flew Goodwyn to the right, and off flew I to the left. Mac. and the refugee hurtled together through the air, straight over the ship's bows. There was a volley at the same moment, just as though Gatesby & Co. had shot at us, flying, mistaking us for a covey of some huge birds that had risen from the ice at their feet. . . . When I had finished the usual spinning dance over the ice, and my giddy senses were able to discern objects with any clearness, I saw two wolves in full career for the Strelna wood, and Gatesby's ice-boat in pursuit. Three great grey beasts were breathing out their savage lives upon the ice, close to us; we brought up near them, and watched for half a minute; they were dying—dead! Then, that Russian refugee rose to his feet, and, from a respectful distance, addressed those wolves in terms which do not bear repetition. Presently, having first made quite certain that it was dead, he approached one of them, and kicked it and spat at it with unnecessary noise and vehemence.

Then, he shook each of us warmly by the hand, and said we were his fathers and his brothers—a statement which we politely accepted, to save the trouble of argument.

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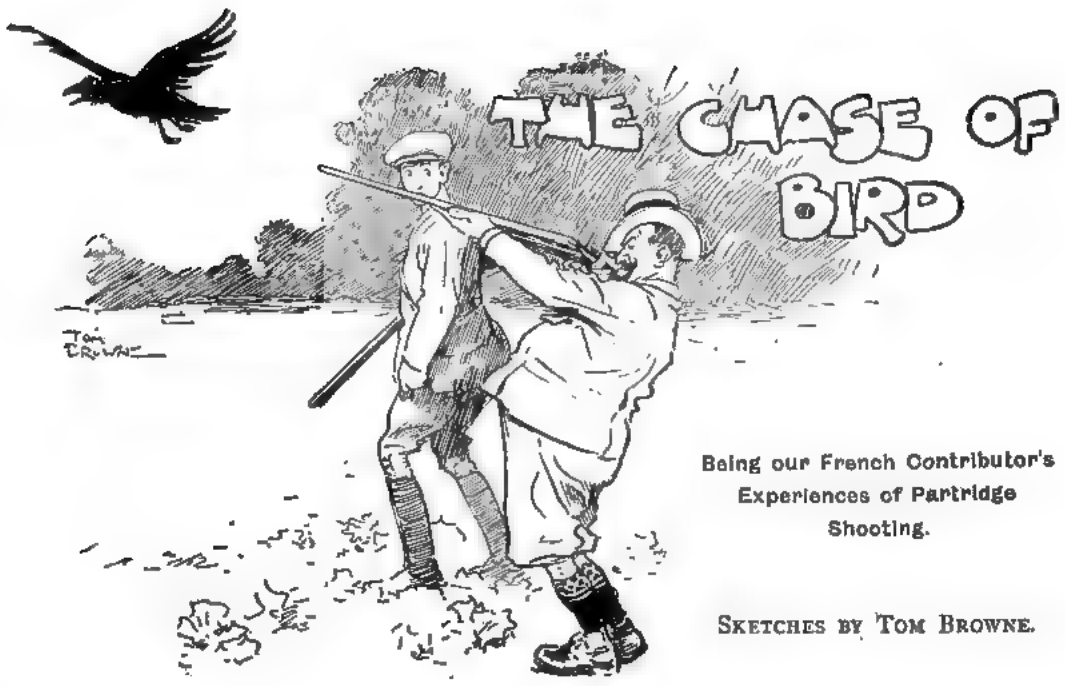


Being our French Contributor's Experiences of Partridge Shooting.

Sketches by Tom Browne.

Mr the Editor,—One time more I take my pen to make myself the honour to address the word to you. "What have you then?" you will say. Look here my replique. A new experience.

I have my idea to essaye all your particularities, your customs, your recreations—in fine your sports. Already I have made proof of your chase of Fox. Your chase of Fox, what is it then? I will tell you. It is a folly!

Regard then. Your Fox is a brigand, is it not? He rob the hen cages — he eat the faisants — he is voleur — the farmers complain themselves at him. It must then to kill him. But he is perhaps grand, strong, fierce, dangerous, as a lion, a tiger. No, my faith, he is small, timid, coward. It is easy to kill him. A blow of fusil and he is dead. At what price? A few centimes. But no! It is defended to kill him thus. It must a paque of dogs, twenty—thirty—fifty—very many a scadron of cavalry, huntmen, grooms! thousands of francs! But, one time more, he is perhaps a bonnebouche—a dish of preference. My faith! only a dog will eat him. His odour! Pah! it is horrible—one cannot touch him, he is inuseful. But, you will say, in all the cases he is killed. But no! very scarcely—sometime perhaps yes, but in general he escape himself. My friend I tell you it is not the Fox who is killed. Who then? It is the Huntmen—myself I know—I have essayed it. Almost I am broken myself the neck—my horse the leg—that cost too dear.

Lastly, is it that you others *desire* the destruction of the Fox? Thousand thunders! But no! You nourish his littles, elevat them. You see they are not touched. You kill him? Possibly—you elevat a dozen of his infants. Is it not then a folly? My faith! what did you say? You cannot answer.

But enough of Fox chase. My new experience, what is it that it is? It is the chase of Bird. In France the sparrow it is a bird, the trush it is a bird, the gullet,* the sterling, the linot—these are some birds. But in England, no. There is not but one Bird—only the Perdrix—Partridge—he is a Bird. At the invitation of my friend I go to chase him. This time it must a fusil. Good! I have one of it! "And a paque?" "Well, no, not a paque; only two—dogs of arrest."

We go in cart to the place of destination. A cart? Yes, of dogs; such is the phrase, but there are not some of them. Behold us arrived, my friend, myself, several firers, a guard of the chase, some batters.

The guard appoint us our places. Myself I am at right; near to me my friend. We advance.

* Our friend must surely mean the swallow.—Ed.

At my right some trees. Good! I regard them earnestly. I shall perhaps see some Birds. All at a blow a noise in the trees. I couch my fusil in cheek. Look! Something all black! It is perhaps a Bird. I press the trigger. Hélas! I have forget to charge the fusil. The Bird escape itself in saying "Aw, aw!" My friend say, "Hullo! What was that?" I replique, "I do not know—it was perhaps a Bird." "A Bird!" he say. "What Bird? You will not find Birds in the trees. Regard the dogs, not the trees—the Birds are on the ground." "Ah! On the ground! They are then young—they have tumble from the nest—they cannot perhaps fly?" "Oh, they can fly fast enough!" he say. "Wait, and you will see." "But, my faith, I do not wish to wait! Myself I wish to shoot them before that they fly after, that shall not be easy." "Oh! nonsense," he say, "you must not shoot them on the ground, only on the wing." "On the wing! But, my faith, if it is difficult to touch the bird itself, how then to touch the wing only?" "No, no! You mistake, M'sieu! I mean to shoot them in flying—but regard the dogs."

The dogs balance. They run at one side and at the other; they are uncertain; they do not perhaps anticipe some Birds. But they are mistake themselves. All at a blow, Brrr! brrr! brrr! the air is full of Birds! Pouf! Pan! pan! pan!—three Birds fall. As for the rest they envole themselves. My friend cry "Mark!" It is perhaps the name of the guard, but he is occupied—he makes no attention. That time I have again couched the fusil in cheek. I touch again the detent—trigger. But, what damage! the battery is at the point of safety!—nothing arrives

My friend say, "Why, you did not fire!" "No," I replique, "the dog* has not tumbled." "The Dog!" he say, all astonished; "but surely you did not fire at the dogs!" "At the dogs! my faith, no! In saying the dog I wish to say the marteau, the—the hammer of the fusil; it has not tumbled. I have forget to arm the fusil." "Oh! that's all right," he say. "I was afraid you had fired at the dogs." "No, no. When I fire, I do not fire at the dogs, only at the company." "Good Lord!" he say, "but that is more worse than never! At the company!† But we do not come out to fire at each other, M'sieu! Do be careful, you must not fire at the company, but at the Birds!" "But, thousand thunders! it is that which I wish to say! I shall fire at the company, the troupe, the——ah, this sacred english!—the flock, is it not?" "Yes, yes; the covey we call it; that is all right. Aim at the covey, and put your fusil en foule coq, and you are all right." "But en foule coq!" I say. "En foule de coq! but how to know the coq from the poule? Is it then defended to kill the poule—the hen?" "No, no! I mean foule coq," he say, "like this, you know—comme ça, M'sieu," and he arm his fusil. "Ah, ah! I comprend"—but what a phrase! foule coq! ma foi! foule coq! What a little black beast of word! Foule coq! atrocious!

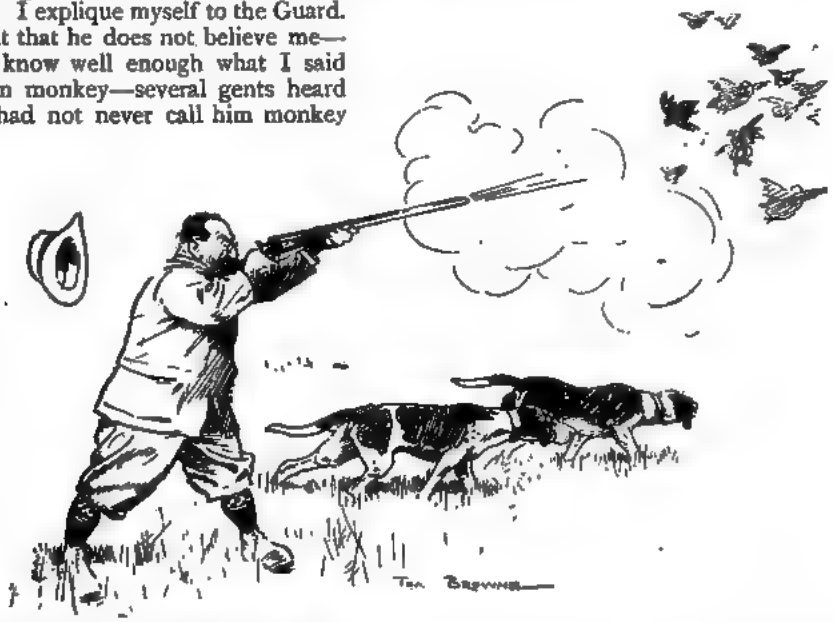
Once more we advance. My fusil, it is charged, is armed. Ah Bah! en foule coq. Again—in an instant, the Birds. This time I make fire, but the Birds do not tumble. Behind of me I hear a laugh. I turn myself. It is the guard. He say in grimacing "You made the feathers fly that time, Sir." "No, no!" I say, all vexed, "Manqué!" He do not grimace more—he go away in gromelling—he has the appearance to be angry. I know not for why It is perhaps a crime not to kill the Birds. But it imports not. Again the advance. We enter a field of corn—it is cut—we march at the chaume—the stumbles, as you say. Voici a good word. My friend say, "Take care, M'sieu, you will catch your feet"—"How then, catch my feet? It is not easy to move so fast the feet here, without doubt I shall catch them." "That is what I say, be careful, you may stumble." "Ah, ah, I see! I comprend, voici for why this here call itself the stumbles! good, that goes well—I shall be careful." Once again the Birds. This time I make fire with both cannons at the middle of the company—the Birds fall—one—two—three—four! My friend say, "Bravo M'sieu! you have a brace that time." "My faith," I say, "a brace! my friend, I have more. I aim at the company—I have a pair of braces." "Ha, ha!" he say in laughing. "If you really aimed at the company you would have a pair of braces and something over, eh? You would fill the bag." I do not comprend him—the bag is very large—a pair of braces will not fill it. "But no," I say, "it is not but four—I am content of it."

The guard address my friend at a low voice—he regard me furtivement—my friend also: it is evident that they speak of me. I ask what he has, the guard? He say, "He complains himself that you outrage him." "Me! outrage! mais, very scarcely I address the word to him!" "Yes, M'sieu, he say that you have called him names." "But, ma foi! I do not know his names, how then can I call him some of them?" "No, no! M'sieu, I mean some *bad* names." "Ah, ah! some bad names! But it is not true

* "*Chien*" is the French for the "cock" of a gun.

† A covey of partridges is "*une compagnie*."

—he has not reason—never I say some injuries to him. What is it then that I have said?" "He says that you called him a monkey!" "A monkey! me! never—never!" "Yes, because you missed your first shot and were angry." "Ah, ah! excellent! I see it! It is a plaisanterie—a good choke, is it not? I have said *manqué*, missed. He does not know the french—poor man, he think I say to him monkey because he make some grimaces. I shall make my apologies." I explique myself to the Guard. It is evident that he does not believe me—he say he know well enough what I said—I call him monkey—several gents heard it—person had not never call him monkey



I MAKE FIRE WITH BOTH CANNONS AT THE MIDDLE OF THE COMPANY.

before. He would not permit an english to call him monkey and why should he permit a french?—he say monkey is not the french for Miss—it is mamselle—he know it—besides, why should anyone call him "Miss"?—he is not woman.

But he is stupid, this pig of guard, this Mr. Mark—I raise the shoulders. It is museful to prolong the discussion. I give him five francs; he take them and go away; but he is not convinced, no—he is still angry, I can nothing of it . . .

It is mid-day. Near a ticket, a bosky is it not? we find some panniers. It is the Lunch. We make halt. We incline ourselves upon the herb—the valets open the panniers—I have hunger, mon Dieu! how I have hunger! thirst also. But voici a banquet veritable, the paté, the rosbif, the ale, the stout. My faith! these english know to nourish themselves! We regale ourselves—we talk—we drink—we shoot again our Birds. How good is the english bière—a little glass of more, if you please. The Bag? Ah Bah! it is easy to fill it; myself I have killed in France many pairs of braces at one blow of fusil; with you others it is different—one blow, one Bird. That is sot; *we* make fire at the company—all together Pouf! Pan! the company is dead!—the sack is full. You others make fire at one Bird each one, possibly at the same Bird. Without doubt it fall dead. Then you quarrel yourselves. "My Bird, I think!" "Pardon, Sir, the mine, I believe!" In effect there is one Bird in the sack. Which then is the better? Ah Bah! can you doubt of it? Listen, my friend, I will tell you. Always the french fashion is more admirable than the english fashion. You doubt still of it?

Then tell me, *why does madame your so estimed wife buy all her robes in Paris?*—Agreez, Monsieur, etc., etc.

VIVE LA FRANCE.

MRS BROWN'S TAME TIGER

THE STORY OF AN INDIAN MAN-EATER.

By H. Hervey. Sketches by T. W. Henry.

THE world we live in is small; India is a fractional portion of it, and we out there generally know something of each other—by hearsay, if not by personal acquaintance. Thus, when it was rumoured that Brown had been appointed executive engineer of the district, we were not at a loss to identify him, although he happened to be a perfect stranger to all of us.

"So we are to have a chap named Brown in place of old Reade," remarked Campbell the judge, as he lounged in among us at the club one morning. "Which Brown is this?"

"F. R.," pithily replied Captain Prendergast, the police superintendent, looking up from the *Graphic*.

"No wiser," said the judge.

"Good lor', Campbell!" exclaimed Rickets, the doctor, "never heard of 'wifey' Brown?"

"Or 'tiger' Brown?" grinned Dreery, a planter.

"No."

"I've never seen the man," observed Rickets, "but he's dubbed 'wifey,' I believe, because Mrs. Brown is one of your plucky, good all-round sort, who manages Brown and all his affairs, official and unofficial. 'Tiger'—as Dreery says—from the fact of their lugging about a tame feline with them wherever they go."

"By gad! from all I've heard about them, they'll prove an acquisition," exclaimed Prendergast.

"You bet!" responded Rickets; "Mrs. B will, if he isn't."

Bhilepore, with a temperate climate, lies half-way up the Wottamullay hills; Ramanandpore, the civil station proper, and hot as fire, is at the foot of the range; but, being within an easy ride, the Ramanandpore officials are allowed to pass the hot months at Bhilepore, so long as they arrange for the due discharge of business. Bhilepore is *de facto*—a mission health resort: the missionaries are in the ascendant, and own most of the houses in the settlement. Below Bhilepore it is fairly open, but the station is environed on the other sides by dense jungle, only awaiting the pioneer to convert it into "coffee country." Nor was the place without its *bete noir*, its "bogey." The Rev. Mr. Sloper, the resident missionary, spoke of a tiger that invaded the little cantonment some few years previously, haunting the neighbourhood for nearly a month, and carrying off five natives within that interval. The then residents had made every effort to destroy the fell intruder, but with no better success than depriving him of his right ear. One night, a convalescent missionary, armed with a rifle,

accompanied by his son with a sharpened sword, sat up for the tiger. They had ensconced themselves on a *machan*, or platform, built in a tree on the outskirts of the clearing; while, for a bait, a goat stood tethered to a sapling within range. In due course, stripes made his appearance; but, ignoring the goat, he hungered after the more toothsome dainties in the tree—squatting beneath it, gazing up at the two men, growling and switching his tail. The *padre* let fly, but only grazed him, whereupon, with a hideous roar, the brute commenced clawing up the trunk. There was no time to re-charge the single barrel muzzle loader; and one of the two "shikaries" (sportsmen) would certainly have been dragged from his perch, had not the lad made a cut at the tiger's head, resulting in the shredding off of the beast's right ear, followed by his ignominious retreat. That tiger never re-visited Bhilepore, nor had he been heard of since.

The Browns engaged "Uplands," a house on a knoll at the extreme end of the station. After a day or two passed in "shaking down," Brown left his card at the club and on our only two ladies. This was the signal for all of us to visit Mrs. Brown, after which that lady would be free to a general participation in our social life. Such is the etiquette in that part of India.

In the meantime Brown's tiger became the general theme of fearsome comment among the natives; not a soul would approach "Uplands" for love or money.

Two men drove up to my bungalow—Campbell, the judge, and Landor, of the Forest Department.

"Have a lift to the Brown's?" cried Campbell from his trap.

"Thanks, with pleasure! I was about riding there."

The horse being rather fresh, we alighted at the gate and walked up the zigzag leading to the house. We gained the plateau. There was no one about, and we were in the act of ascending the steps when Campbell—who led—abruptly halted. We soon saw the cause—the tawny-yellow form of a large tiger stretched on the verandah floor. He lay on his right side, facing us, and the gentle heave of his flanks denoted that he slept.

"Ahem!" coughed the judge, by way of a gentle rouser.

Stripes opened one eye, and then leisurely rose to his feet; but we were horrified to mark that he lacked his right ear. The story of the Bhilepore man-eater flashed athwart our minds; we were seized with a panic, and all three of us plunged down that hill in headlong flight. We waited not to clamber into the dog-cart; the horsekeeper, taking the alarm, careered after us, leading his beast at a trot; and finally, breathless and panting, we brought up at my bungalow.

A fellow-feeling caused us to send round to the few other residents with the news; these came posting in, and I soon had the whole of Bhilepore congregated under my roof. While discussing the situation, we saw a man riding past, a stranger to all.

"That must be Mr. Brown," remarked Mr. Sloper.

In a "jiffy" we streamed to the gates and waylaid the horseman.

"Mr. Brown, I presume?" cried Rickets.

"Yes."

"Going to 'Uplands'?"

"Yes; I've just ridden in from Ramanandpore."

"Well, come-I-say-you-know," put in Campbell, "I advise you to be careful. Not an hour ago three of us went to call on Mrs. Brown, and we saw a loose tiger lying in your verandah. We have heard you keep a pet of the kind, but, come-I-say-you-know, this couldn't have been your brute!"

"Why not?" queried Brown.

"Because he's minus his right ear, a deficiency peculiar to a man-eater that played Old Harry here some few years ago. Is it not so, Mr. Sloper?" turning to the missionary.

"It is," replied his reverence.

"May I be told what all you gentlemen are doing here?" asked Brown.

"Well," replied the judge, "most of us intended calling on you to-day, but when—as I've said—I and two others found the blessed man-eater in possession of your verandah, why, come-I-say-you-know, we skedaddled, and sent word round warning folks against venturing to 'Uplands.' Of course, we concluded that Mrs. Brown was not in the house."

"I'm sorry you should have experienced a scare," answered Brown, "but I feel sure your eyes must have deceived you when you mistook Tom for a man-eater."

"Who's Tom?" asked several, in a breath.

"Our tiger; harmless as a lamb. However, we shall take the will for the deed, and consider that you have called, so we'll join you at the club this evening. Drop in informally at any time, and we'll introduce you to Tom; you can then see for yourselves what a docile beast he is. Good day!"

They were stretching the tennis nets, and several of us were seated in the semi-circle of chairs, when suddenly there arose a commotion among the servants; some fled while others

standing their ground, gazed in one direction; we looked the same way, to behold a lady and gentleman—the Browns—walking up the road, while at their heels slouched a tiger, unchained and unmuzzled!

Instinctively we jumped up and retreated behind the chairs; the Browns noticed the movement, for he grinned broadly—confound him!—and Mrs. Brown smiled too.

"Pray don't be frightened!" she exclaimed, acknowledging our general salute, "he's not a man-eater, and is quite tame."

But somehow, we did not see it; whereupon, to our confusion, she breached our rampart by pulling away a chair, and walked through the gap with the tiger following her.

Uttering a yell of terror, the man turned and fled, but Tom caught him up in a few springs, bowled him over, and then set to patting him with his huge paw. On Mrs. Brown whistling, the animal came frisking back to her side.

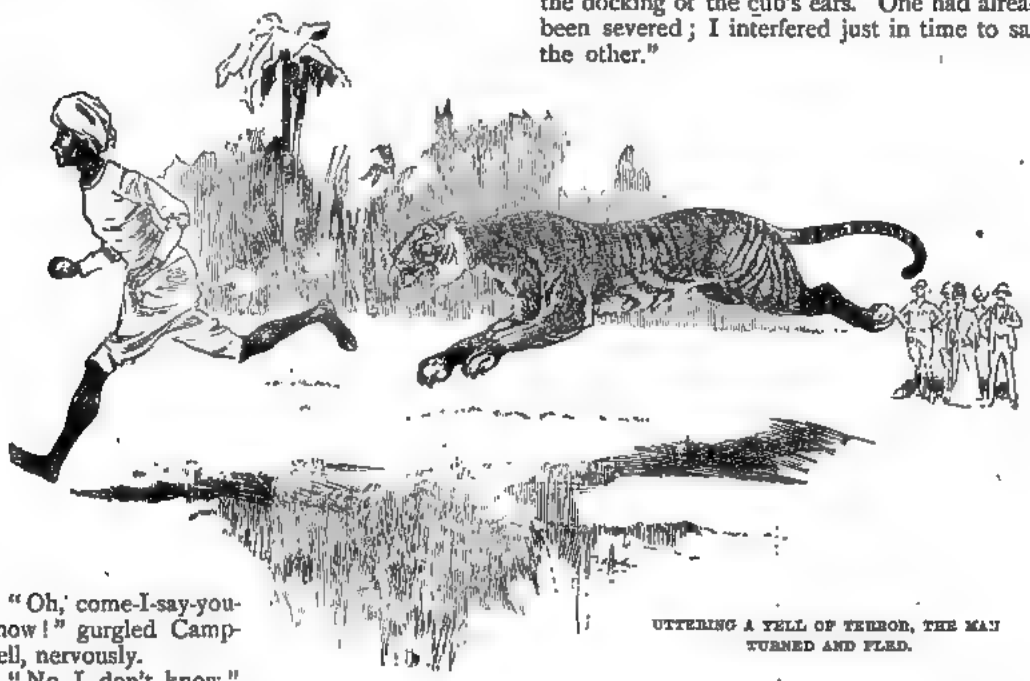
We were reassured! Tom was tame; no doubt of it! So we let ourselves out in talk.

"But how is it?" asked Campbell, "that he should so resemble the Bhilapore man-eater?—how is it he is without his right ear?"

"Easily explained," replied the lady. "He was given as a cub to my husband; they brought him while I was out, and when I returned what do you think I found him doing?"

"Who?—the cub or Mr. Brown?" asked Rickets.

"My husband: there he was superintending the docking of the cub's ears. One had already been severed; I interfered just in time to save the other."



UTTERING A YELL OF TERROR, THE MAN TURNED AND FLED.

"Oh, come-I-say-you-know!" gurgled Campbell, nervously.

"No, I don't know," laughed Mrs. Brown. "Do make friends—he won't hurt you. Tom!" she added to the feline, "go and do 'chin-chin'!"

Tom started to do "chin-chin" by rubbing himself against our legs promiscuously, adorning our immaculate white flannels with tawny-orange hairs in the process.

"You see, he hasn't a bite in him," remarked Mrs. Brown. "Now for some fun. Tom! Jumboo! Jumboo! Tsoo!!"

At this mysterious mandate, Tom woke up and gazed about him spryly; spotting one of the club servants who stood, open-mouthed, looking on, he bounded away towards him.

"But, come-I-say-you know, what for?"

"To convert him into a terrier, the silly!—quite forgetting that the tiger is a feline, not a canine."

This explained it so far, and we all laughed heartily.

Tom soon became a general favourite, and roamed about of his own sweet will at all hours. Our dogs, too, made friends with him, and it was amusing to see him in a gambol with a pack of terriers and spaniels; rolling them over in succession, letting them tread on him and pull him about, but never hurting them.

"We experienced an awful scare during the

night," observed Prendergast, joining the party assembled for Mrs. Brown's morning Badminton. "Your Tom, Mrs. Brown, paid us a visit."

"Very possibly, for I never chain him up now. But surely you know him by this time!"

"We do, but being roused from sleep by a deep breathing, and then seeing a tiger looking in at the window in the full glare of the night-lamp is startling, you will own."

"We must tie you up to-night, mustn't we, Tom?" remarked his mistress.

"Oh, come-I-say-you-know, rather! The incoming folks would be demoralized: Lady Elliot, for one, would faint if the tiger presented himself."

"And you'd be a marked man, Brown," laughed Landor. "Sir John would never forgive you if Tom came round and sent Lady Elliot into hysterics."

The conversation referred to an inspection visit of the Commissioner, Sir John Elliot, accompanied by his lady and several members —both men and women—of his suite. Tents had been pitched for their accommodation in the club-house grounds; and a big dinner was to be given in their honour that evening at the club.

The party arrived during the forenoon, and everyone became busy till it was time to disperse and dress for the great function of the day —the dinner. Our two ladies—as hostesses—came early, and Campbell, the chief civilian, was there to receive them.

"You've secured Tom, I hope?" he whispered, as he handed Mrs. Brown from her dog-cart.

"Yes; he's all safe; I padlocked him myself, and left him in charge of the lascar."

The dinner passed off satisfactorily, and, after the meal, some adjourned to the billiard-room, others gathered round the piano with the ladies, while smokers—I was one—slipped out into the verandah for a cigar.

"Oh! come—I——"

"Look there!" suddenly exclaimed Landor, cutting short Campbell's favourite expression, and pointing towards the shrubbery, shimmering in the silvery light of a tropical full moon. "Look there!"

We looked, and on the verge of the bushes beyond the carriage way we distinctly made out the head and shoulders of a tiger; and we plainly perceived that he wanted his right ear!

"By Jingo! it's Tom!" muttered Rickets; "there'll be a fine shindy if the others see him. Better apprise Mrs. Brown quietly."

"No!" put in Prendergast; "they'll guess something's up. Brown's horsekeeper will do; I've seen him handle the beast at 'Uplands.'"

The conveyances stood along the club-house front, the horses dozing on three legs, the horsekeepers squatted in a circle—gossiping.

"Mrs. Brown's horsekeeper!" said Prendergast in a vernacular undertone, approaching the group.

"Yes, sir!" replied one of them.

"There's your master's tiger," whispered Prendergast, surreptitiously indicating the shrubbery. "If the strange ladies see him they will be alarmed. Go quietly; take him back to the house."

Muttering his surprise at seeing the animal at large, the horsekeeper sped across the carriage sweep; we heard his low "Tom! Tom!" we saw the tiger crouch; we expected him to turn over on his back as he usually did; we expected to see him in the grasp of the man. But instead, the animal suddenly shot out of the bushes, threw the poor wretch to the ground, seized him by the neck and dragged him shrieking away!

No time for niceties now! We raised the hue and cry; but there was not a gun in the club-house! Guests and hosts came streaming out into the verandah, and all was confusion and dismay. Ladies fainted or screamed; men shouted and lost their heads. Leaving the strangers to be tended to by the Slopers, her husband and others, Mrs. Brown called on Prendergast, Campbell, and me to accompany her. I brought round her dog-cart, and we four clambered in.

"I shall not believe it was Tom till I see with my own eyes that he is not where I left him," she remarked excitedly.

We said nothing; we had as much as we could do to hold on, for we were going at headlong speed. We plunged in at the gates and dashed madly up the hill to the house; we all scrambled down, and hurrying up the steps, there, under the verandah lamp, we saw Tom snugly cuddled in his blanket, his heavy chain and steel collar intact.

"You darling!" cried Mrs. Brown, throwing her bare arms round the feline's neck, as he started up to greet his mistress. "I told you so! Lascar," she added, addressing the night watchman who stood by, "has Tom been loose to-night?"

"No, ma'am; he has not moved from here."

"There! what do you say to that, gentlemen?"

Nothing! we were puzzled and dumbfounded; for not fifteen minutes ago we had seen a one-eared tiger carry off a man from under our very noses; now, we looked on a one-eared tiger, chained and tethered; an animal we knew to have no ferocious propensities. And yet?

"Well, if you ere now saw a tiger minus the right ear, and if, as we believe, it was not Tom,

then depend upon it that the man-eater has again turned up," remarked Mr. Sloper, who with Rickets, had joined us.

A silence of conjecture; to be broken by Mrs. Brown, "Whatever it is, I am going after that tiger," she observed in a resolute voice, "and will show you another good point in Tom. Three accompany me. Will you?" addressing me.

Needless to say that I agreed.

"You, Dr. Rickets, and you, Mr. Campbell."

She whisked off to change her attire. "Come along," she said on rejoining us, "and let us arm!"

We followed her into a lighted room where, from a rack, we helped ourselves to a rifle apiece, and pocketed some cartridges, while she assumed a Winchester repeater. "This, in case he is unable to master him," she remarked.

"Who?—to master who?" inquired Rickets vaguely.

"Tom goes with us, and you'll probably see a fight between them. We must only fire if he can't defeat the man-eater. Come!"

Unfastening Tom, and leading him by a leather thong, she headed us down the hill.

"Now listen," she said. "This is nothing new to Tom and me. Keep close behind us, and don't talk. We will first go to the spot where the man was seized; there I will unslip Tom, and all we have to do is to follow him."

This *was* an adventure! Mrs. Brown glowed with excitement; she fairly inoculated us; we promised every obedience, and braced ourselves for the task before us.

The party had dispersed from the club-house. Lady Elliot and her suite, fearful of occupying the tents, had removed into the building, and we could see Sir John and one or two men through the glass doors of the reading room, snug in their arm-chairs.

Arrived at the spot of the seizure, Mrs. Brown unleashed Tom; the brute had already shown signs of disquietude, and was no sooner free than he began to sniff around. On "nosing" the blood he gave vent to a deep growl, and started off on the scent, his speed being checked by an occasional word from his mistress. Tom quickly cleared the station, and led us into the jungle that grew to the boundary. There was no "trail," as of a body dragged along; the man-eater, therefore, must have thrown his victim over his shoulder—the tiger's usual procedure when his prey is light enough. Our guide, however, wavered not, and steadily held on. We had penetrated about half a mile into the jungle when Tom's whole demeanour changed. He now assumed a more cautious, a more cat-like tread. His one ear lay flat to his head, his tail "flicked" from side to side, and when, on occasion, he looked up at us, the moonlight showed a fiendish, "tigerish" face,

THE ANIMAL SUDDENLY SHOT OUT OF THE BUSHES.

so different from his usually placid — nay, stolid—expression.

We were evidently closing up. In a fever of suppressed excitement we moved stealthily forward, Tom crawling rather than walking. We were coming to a clearing, for a patch of uninterrupted moonlight glittered in our front. We gained its edge, and just as our eyes rested on the skulking form of a tiger—a one-eared tiger—half carrying, half-dragging a human body, Tom shot from our midst, and with one magnificent bound sprang into the clearing. Now ensued a scene that beggars description. You have witnessed two tom-cats settling their differences, no doubt. Well, imagine two tigers in lieu of the cats, and you have the spectacle to a nicety. The combatants were easily

distinguishable. Tom, the smaller animal, possessed a bright, glossy coat; the man-eater, the larger, was mangy, and presented an unkempt appearance. In one respect, however, they were identical—*each was short of his right ear!*

Tom snarled a challenge. The stranger, nothing loth, responded, dropped his victim, and stood on the defensive. They spat and grinned at each other, uttering low, deep-voiced growls and moans; approaching gingerly, treading as if on "hot bricks." At length they came nose to nose; they ceased giving tongue, and seemed to be gauging each other olfactorily. Then, as if by mutual consent, they uttered a simultaneous roar, sprang erect, joined in deadly embrace, and rolled over and over on the ground. Tom had hold of his enemy by the shoulder; the man-eater had fixed his fangs on his opponent's neck, while the fore-claws of both were embedded in their adversary's back, and the red blood streamed from the wounds. They fought in comparative silence, every now and then giving forth a half growl, half whine; this, and the rustling of the dead leaves, were the only sounds. We looked on spellbound. All our sympathies were with Tom, but as the fight progressed it appeared as if the man-eater would gain the mastery. Tom lay underneath, his hind-claws ploughing at his foe's breast and stomach; his fore-claws, however, had relinquished their hold, and the man-eater, taking advantage of this, did his best to finish the business out of hand. But just at this juncture Tom seemed to pull himself together. With a mighty effort he freed himself of his adversary, and sprang clear. For a space they regarded each other; then, with a terrific roar, Tom again launched himself on the man-eater, this time pinning him by the throat. Holding on tenaciously, and agilely avoiding the other's hind-claws, Tom relaxed not a muscle. Gradually the man-eater's struggles grew weaker; Tom held on like grim death, and then, after some minutes, the marauder's limbs relaxed, and he was dead!

WE LOOKED ON SPELLBOUND.

We cautiously approached the body of the horsekeeper. Rickets hastily examined him, and pronounced him to be still alive. We managed to carry the poor fellow between us there and then to the hospital, and, in spite of a fearful mauling, he eventually recovered.

Tom carries a silver collar now, and Mrs. Brown wears a heavy gold bangle, each with a suitable inscription, presented by us in commemoration of that eventful night. The man-eater was stuffed, and now stands under glass in the club-house verandah

A Tale of a Tip

By the Rev. E. E. Bradford.

Illustrated by T. M. R. Whitwell.

ALL that long fourth of June had Dick trotted about with his uncle, and every fellow at Eton who has had any of his people down for the Festival—and who has not?—knows what a labour of love it is to look after them!

After "Absence" (or roll call) in Weston's Yard they had strolled round together to have a look at the cricket match which was going on in the playing-fields. But almost at once they had to leave in order to take their places in Upper School, to witness the somewhat miscellaneous entertainment which is included under the name of "speeches." Then, after luncheon, Dick had been in attendance again to pilot his uncle round to the playing-fields once more, that he might listen to the band, and admire the ladies' toilettes. Then followed a tea party in Dick's own room, given in his uncle's honour; and, after another "Absence"—this time in school yard—Dick had conducted his guest down to the Brocas to see the procession of boats. As Uncle McGregor could not stop for the fireworks, Dick and his chief chum, Charlie Sable, had walked over to Windsor with him, to see him safely off by the G.W.R. Then came the critical moment of *adieux*—and parting tips. Dick's hopes were not high, for he knew his Scotch uncle's weakness. Still, even he felt a shock when he received *one shilling!*

Dick would not have minded if he had been alone, but Charlie Sable's eagle eyes had noticed that a coin had been slipped into his chum's palm at the final hand-shaking, and hardly had the train begun to move off before he said eagerly, "How much?"

"Oh, uncle never gives much," answered Dick carelessly, dropping the coin into his pocket. "Come along; let us hurry back. I want to get some stamps before the shops close."

"All right," assented Sable; "but, I say, I saw him give you something, and so he jolly well ought to after all the fuss you made with him. What was it—a quid?"

"Oh, dry up, do!" cried Dick emphatically. "What an avaricious beggar you are, Charlie. You're always thinking about coin!"

In a few minutes they were standing before a shop window in High Street, where sundry packets of stamps engaged all their attention. As they were eagerly discussing how best they could lay out their spare cash, a childish voice from behind them said timidly, "If you are thinking of buying some stamps, sir, perhaps you would look at these?"

Dick turned round, and saw a ragged, pale, half-starved little urchin of nine or ten years old.

But Charlie, who was always keen on a good bargain, was the first to speak. "Let's have a look at them," he said.

The child handed him a little penny account book, very worn and dirty, with a dozen or two of the commonest stamps in it.

"Oh, thank you!" cried Charlie, glancing

through it disdainfully, "I don't want that sort of rubbish!"

The boy's eyes filled with tears, and Dick, whose heart was as soft as butter, asked him kindly how much he wanted for the lot?"

"You may 'ave 'em all for sixpence, sir," said the boy wistfully.

"Sixpence! they're not worth twopence!" said Charlie with scorn.

But Dick glided his uncle's shilling into the poor boy's hand, and put the despised stamps into his pocket. He thought so little of his purchase that after the first glance at the stamps —which were of the most ordinary description —he threw them into the drawer of his "burry," and there they lay undisturbed till next half. But then, one wet afternoon, "after four," when he and Charlie Sable were engaged in looking over and re-arranging their stamp albums, Dick happened to require a French 5c. stamp to give symmetry to a series by filling up a blank space.

He remembered with a smile that this was one of the treasures he had bought with Uncle McGregor's shilling, and pulling the despised account book out of his "burry," he was just going to extract the stamp, when he remarked that two leaves of the little book had stuck together. As they were at the end, after a long series of blank pages, he had never noticed this before. With his pen-knife he soon succeeded in separating them, for they were only lightly attached. There were a good many marks of gum, showing where stamps had formerly been, and some of this must have got damp and stuck. All the stamps had gone save one. But that one!

Dick gazed at it in awe-struck wonder. "I say, Charlie," he cried at last, "look there!"

Charlie came over, and when he saw he felt much like the Queen of Sheba probably did when she came to Solomon's superlative staircase, but instead of coming out with a neat little speech, as she did, he was so taken aback that he could think of nothing better to say than "Oh, golly!" But the tone more than made up for the poverty of the words.

The stamp which had occasioned all this excitement was a British Guiana 4c., of the issue of 1850-1851, and with the initials of the postmaster written on it in ink that was turned yellow with age.

"Well, it isn't mine," said Dick regretfully. Then, brightening up, he added: "Won't that poor little chap be delighted to hear we have found such a treasure?"

"You don't mean to say you will take it back to him?" cried Charlie, in a tone of disgust.

"Of course I do!" retorted Dick hotly. "He didn't mean to sell one a stamp worth £50 for 6d. I expect that whenever all the other valuable ones were removed, this was left in by mistake and forgotten. To judge by the appearance of the book, which I am sure looks old enough and dirty enough for anything, I should think that was a jolly long while ago, and probably at that time the stamp was of no great value."

But Dick's honesty was destined to cost him nothing. In spite of all the inquiries he made it was impossible to discover the little beggar boy, and Dick remained the undisputed owner of the precious stamp. He sent it up to Messrs. Moses & Aaron in Fenchurch Street, and after some negotiations he finally received for it a cheque for £40!

By Charlie Sable's advice he did not tell any of the other fellows of his good luck, for, as Charlie said: "All those beggars who come round for subscriptions will be down on you like a load of bricks if they hear you're such a nabob." Nor did Dick tell his good luck even to his people at home, for he thought he would reserve it as a delightful Christmas surprise, and give them all marvellous presents.

Some weeks after this, when he was beginning to grow accustomed to the idea that he was a millionaire on a small scale, and had formed so many projects that even the £40 would barely suffice to carry them out—one evening, as he and his chum were having tea together, Charlie Sable, who was looking over the newspaper, and whose thoughts always ran upon money, descanted upon the marvellous success of some of the South African gold-mining companies.

"Now here's a new one—the 'Teba'—started with £1 shares. Why don't you invest some of your cash in that? You've got more than you know what to do with."

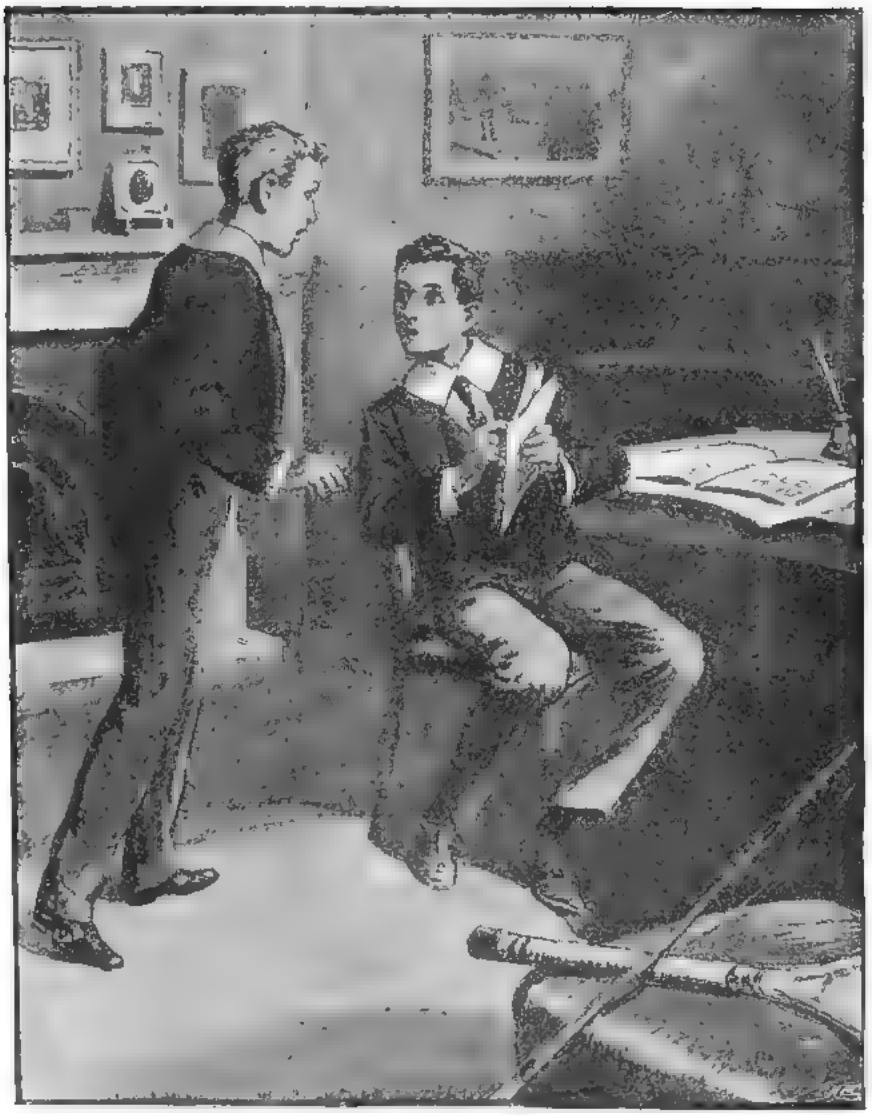
Dick was charmed with the idea. All those bank-notes in his "burry" were a continual anxiety to him. He took out the whole bundle, wrote the most business-like letter he could manage, requesting that forty £1 shares should be allotted to him, and enclosed the notes in payment.

Marvellous luck attended him. Toward the end of the half his shares had risen to more than ten times their initial value, and when he determined to sell out he found himself the proud and happy possessor of over £400!

It chanced that about this time he received a letter from his elder sister, Mary, in which the following passage occurred:—

You are always standing up for Uncle McGregor. I wonder if this will open your eyes to what a mean old creature he really is! Father has been lately speculating

on a small scale in some of these new South African gold-mining companies, and has been very unlucky. His losses are not really very serious, you know; but they have made him very short of ready money for the moment. So he wrote to unc'e asking him to lend him a few hundred pounds. You know uncle is as rich as Crœsus; and what can an old bachelor like him find to spend h's money on? But — would you believe it?—the stingy old hunks wrote back to say that all his money was invested; and, besides that, he had a prejudice against lending money to anyone—even to his brother-in-law! If he comes to stay with us this Christmas again he'll get even a colder reception than he had last time!



"OH, GOLLY!"

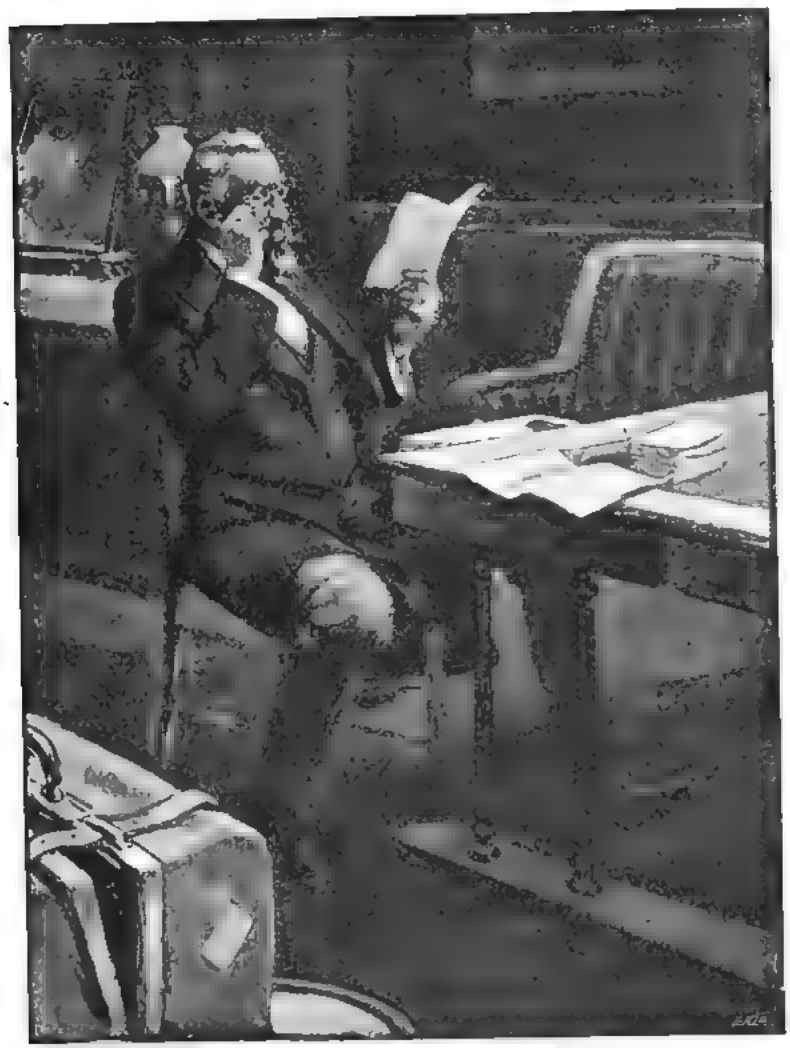
As Dick read over this letter, his sympathies were not altogether on the side of the writer; he cou'd not help thinking that if Uncle McGregor was rather "close" he had some excuse for this. All the Verners seemed to regard their rich uncle as their lawful prey. Dick could remember the time when his uncle used to be much more free with his money, and Dick had more than a suspicion that it was in a great measure the greediness of his nephews and nieces that had dried up the source of their uncle's liberality. Every Christmas Mr. McGregor paid the Verners a visit. He was always kindness itself—good-humoured, obliging, and cheerful. But the broadest hints had failed to revive his old generosity, and every year he was treated with less consideration. For a long time Dick ruminated over this unpleasant state of things with a very long face; then, all at once, he cried, "Eureka! I have it! It will be an awful lark!

He got out a sheet of note-paper, and one of Uncle McGregor's old letters, and having studied the latter very attentively for a few minutes, carefully copying his uncle's handwriting he began:—

MY DEAR RICHARD,—When you wrote to me the other day, asking for the loan of a few hundred pounds, I was suffering from an attack of my old enemy, the gout, which, as you know, always affects my temper. Besides, I really have a prejudice against lending money. I object to it on principle (that's a good phrase, said Dick to himself, uncle is always using it) but it is the principle alone that I care for—and, after all, why should I abandon it?—What are a few hundreds to me? I enclose notes for £400, and you are

very welcome to them. But I will not regard this as a loan, and I shall be really angry if you ever think of repaying me. I cannot help thinking that we all attach far too much importance to money. You may have noticed that I seldom give presents to the youngsters now. It is simply because I cannot bear the fuss they make over them. And now I shall ask you, as a personal favour, never to thank me for this little present, and never even to mention it to me again.

Dick concluded the epistle with a few commonplaces, carefully copied from the letter before him, and completed his crime by boldly forging his uncle's signature at the end. He then put it into an envelope and addressed it, and as there was a fellow in Dick's house who lived in the same town as Mr. McGregor, he, at Dick's request, sent it under cover to his younger brother, with instructions that it should be posted from there.



MR. MCGREGOR CAREFULLY ADJUSTED HIS EYE-GLASSES AND BEGAN TO READ.

The plot succeeded perfectly. Mr. McGregor's well-known eccentricity prevented his brother-in-law from smelling a rat. Dick went home for the Christmas holidays before his uncle arrived, and so he was able to take part in the family council as to how their benefactor should be received

Dick's earnest advice was that they should receive him just as usual, only they might perhaps be a trifle more cordial. But other views prevailed.

The general opinion was that as they were expressly forbidden to put their thanks into words, they were all the more bound to show their gratitude—which was quite as prospective as retrospective—by extra attention to his comfort. Mr. and Mrs. Verner even insisted upon installing their honoured guest in their own room, which was the largest and most luxuriously furnished in the house. Alas! this idea proved most disastrous!

When Uncle McGregor, quite bewildered by the extreme cordiality of his reception, and still more by sundry more or less veiled hints at his generosity, which were made in the course of the evening, at last retired to the room prepared for him; after his usual custom, he began leisurely to unpack and arrange his things comfortably. Thinking he would write a few letters before going to bed, he got out envelopes and paper from his portmanteau, and drew out the drawer of a writing table in which to place them. As he did so, something caught his eye. What was that letter in his own handwriting? He did not remember having written it! Mr. McGregor carefully adjusted his eye-glasses, and began to read:—

MY DEAR RICHARD,—When you wrote the other day

asking for the loan of a few hundred pounds, I was suffering from an attack of my old enemy the gout, which, as you know, always affects my temper.

"Heaven and earth!" cried poor Mr. McGregor in amazement. "What abominable forgery is this? What plot have I unearthed?"

He glanced at the end to see if his own name was forged, too. Yes, there it stood, as bold as brass, "Alec McGregor."

"Well," he ruminated, "I have heard of fellows walking and talking in their sleep, but I never heard of them writing letters!" He read the whole epistle carefully through, and was more astounded than ever. Then he examined the writing more closely. At places Dick had been less careful, and at last Mr. McGregor detected his nephew's hand.

"Well, this beats everything!" he cried. "Where on earth has the young rascal got the money from? Has he sent his father a forged cheque? No, he speaks of notes!"

It was too late to clear up the mystery that evening, but the next day Mr. McGregor had a private interview with his hopeful nephew, who soon was driven to make a full confession. His uncle pretended to be very angry, and gave Dick a good scolding, but he was secretly touched by the boy's unselfish wish to make his uncle's Christmas visit a pleasant one, and he was struck, above all, by the marvellous indifference to money which the boy had displayed throughout the whole affair. So he kept Dick's secret, and Mr. Verner never knew where the £400 came from. Since then Uncle McGregor has been more liberal to all his nephews and nieces, but as for the presents and tips he showers upon Dick, I shall not attempt to describe them, for you would hardly believe me if I did.

And whenever the rich uncle dies there is no doubt as to who will inherit the main part of his wealth, but I think that when this takes place, Dick's eyes will be far too dim with tears to be dazzled with the gleam of the gold.

A HOME MUSEUM.

FOR the benefit of "Captainites" I will relate how I have obtained the nucleus of an interesting home collection of curios.

Eight years ago, while wandering by a small river, I noticed a twig projecting from a hedge, and on many thorns with which the stick was covered were impaled wasps, bees, and various flies. However were these poor things put there? I took it home, and found out—'twas the work of the red-backed shrike, or "butcher bird," as it is termed. This bird is not content with insects to fill its pantry, but will even stock little birds as well, for two years ago I found, on the Surrey hills, a wren treated in the same manner.

I put the twig away on a table, and resolved to look out for interesting things (as I live in the country), and make a collection. My curios now number many hundreds, from a locust to a fossil.

One day I visited the *Windward*, Dr. Nansen's provisioning ship, which was at anchor in St. Catherine's Dock. We were curious to explore it, and by a little persuasion, helped by a coin of the realm, we were allowed to ramble over the vessel at our pleasure. We strayed below deck, and found there a heap of walrus' heads. My collecting spirit appeared. Here was a small memento of a memorable voyage! So I put out my hand, and pulled three stiff bristles, or whiskers, from one of the heads, and very soon made exit from the *Windward*.

Readers will find what a number of curios may be obtained from friends who have most interesting things stored away and perhaps forgotten. Relations in foreign parts will no doubt be willing to send over anything likely to augment the contents of the tables.

Among Boer War mementoes I have a piece of Queen's chocolate, which a soldier carried in his knapsack through three engagements; also a Lee-Metford bullet, which was in a bandolier during three encounters.

I have stuffed birds, birds' eggs, numerous fossils, snakes' skins, war relics, and almost everything one can think of. I have found it necessary now to catalogue my collection.

I hope, by my short article, that I have persuaded a few CAPTAIN readers, boys or girls, to commence this comparatively new hobby, and am sure a little trouble will be repaid by one day gazing on their own "home museum."

F. W. FIELD.

THE STAMP COLLECTOR.

CONDUCTED BY H. M. GOOCH.

HOW TO START A STAMP COLLECTION.

"EAST-WEST, home's best!" Roving first to the Emerald Isle, then back to dear old England, only to chase away again to the Highlands of Scotland, gives one a disposition to literary slackness. The Old Fag tells me I ought to apologize for my protracted absence from our philatelic school-house, so here goes, and thanks to the man who has undertaken at short notice to give a lecture in my absence.

How has your long vacation been spent?—please note I am writing this in October, as Christmas numbers are not printed a week before they are required. From accounts in various papers, and from what I have been told by keen stamp men, who, if on a holiday, always have their weather eye open for a stamp bargain, it seems that a kind of war-stamp fever has arisen from the carnage of the battle-fields, which, having affected both Boer and Briton in Africa, has been wafted over to the hub of the Universe, claiming its victims by thousands. In short, thousands who, prior to the war stamp issues were void of any interest in philately, are now stamp mad, and on every hand one is asked: "Have you any Mafeking Besieged stamps?" or, "How many varieties of Orange Free State surcharged V.R.I. have you got?" and, "What will you give me for the 1s. value?" etc.

Now if you find yourself answering to this description, take your seat, and bring a note book, for the lecture is about to commence.

With the *pros* and *cons* of war issues and similar stamps I am not concerned here, only to remark that *bona-fide* issues such as the Orange Free State and Transvaal stamps surcharged V.R.I. are the means of interesting thousands in stamp collecting, and form an object lesson on the usefulness of philately as imparting habits of study, accuracy, knowledge of history and geography, and other lessons which will be found invaluable in after life.

In starting a stamp collection it is essential that we possess at least *some* stamps. This is no difficult matter. Your morning post will provide at least two varieties, which, if not rare, are nevertheless by no means amongst the most inartistic of present-day labels. I refer to the 1d. and ½d. current British. But even if you possess these, with or without others, first steps have to be taken on the ladder of philatelic fame, and I will call this the Soaking Process. Every vestige of paper must be removed before any further progress can be made, and whether the number of specimens be few or many, let this be effected without delay.

A basin, some tepid water, and a piece of blotting-paper. The basin or dish as shallow as possible, with a wide top to accommodate a fair number of stamps; the water *tepid*, *not* cold, to avoid cracking through gum remaining on the backs when dry; and the blotting-paper to lay the specimens on face down, thus absorbing the moisture and providing for quick drying.

It will be wise to effect the soaking of all stamps at one operation, if they do not number very many; but make it a hard and fast rule not to pass into the collection, however mounted, any specimens which have not been so treated.

There is no need to completely immerse the specimens; with some stamps, such as the current British and Russian, Indian, etc., this would be disastrous, as, printed in *aniline* colours, they will be completely disfigured after their baptism. Simply float the specimens on the top of the water *face upwards*, and in a few minutes the stamp should easily peel away from its backing. Be careful not to tear or injure the specimen in any way; a wet stamp is easily damaged.

Our next step involves some precautions. Scissors and paste are both sworn enemies to a stamp collection. *Never* trim the margins or perforations of any specimen, and *never* allow yourself to adopt the gum-pot process of mounting resorted to by our forefathers. Either gum or paste will eventually spoil the specimens, and will also prevent their removal from the album for examination or for replacing by cleaner specimens.

The accepted method of mounting to-day is by means of "hinges"—small slips of grease-proof paper, gummed on one side. These can be obtained at a low price per thousand from the dealers advertising in THE CAPTAIN. But, even if funds will not allow of their purchase, home-made mounts or hinges can be manufactured by means of some foreign paper and some good

gum, or gum arabic if possible. Brush over one side of the paper with the gum, then when dry (place the coated sheets in a warm cistern-room, if possible), cut up into slips about ⅛in. wide, further dividing, according to the size of the specimen to be mounted, about ¼in. for the ordinary size.

Reels of gummed paper can be purchased at almost any stationer's now; these are eminently suitable also; but, in any case, *never* employ the waste stamp paper provided at post offices. The paper is far too thick, and the consequence will be an unsightly album, bulging out with stamps which, mounted in a slovenly fashion, with a makeshift mount, cannot be removed without bringing with them a portion of the album itself.

The third step concerns the use of the mounts. To be nicely hinged, it should be possible to turn over a specimen for examination when in the album without creasing the margins or perforations. This can only be effected in one way. Double the stamp mount lengthwise, exactly even, with the gum outwards. Then wet one side and place it on the back of the stamp, so that the crease in the mount is horizontal with the top edge of the specimen. Then wet the exposed gum side and neatly lay the specimen exactly in the centre of the space provided in the album. Uniformly mounted in this way a collection becomes increasingly a thing of beauty and a joy for ever.

We now need an album; but this deserves more space than I can give this month; so look out for the January issue of THE CAPTAIN, and I will tell you which I consider the best albums for young collectors, and also give you some valuable hints on different methods of collecting.

SOME INTERESTING NEW ISSUES.

The Stamp Editor of THE CAPTAIN *will be glad to receive early information of New Issues for chronicle in these pages. Full acknowledgment will be given for any information which can be used, and specimens will be promptly returned.*

Books or articles for review should be accompanied by particulars of price, etc.

BRITISH GUIANA.—I illustrate a new 2c. stamp, which is really nothing else but the ordinary 2c. stamp (lilac and orange) printed in the colours of the 96c. value. This seems to imply a change in the 96c. at an early date. 2c. lilac and rose.

BRITISH GUIANA

CAROLINE ISLANDS.—A group of islands in the North Pacific, plentifully supplied with six stamps; the current German issues overprinted "KAROLINEN." 3pf. brown, 5pf. green, 10pf. red, 20pf. blue, 25pf. orange, 50pf. brown — all surcharged in black.

"KAROLINEN."

CEYLON 15c. BLUE.

CEYLON.—Here is an old stamp in a new colour—15c. blue.

FRENCH COLONIES.—I illustrate one of a series of labels among the ugliest and worst printed that have ever been issued. If readers take my advice they will not waste money on the labels from the French, Portuguese, and other colonies. Many of them are issued for the collector pure and simple. The values in the present instance range from 1c. to 5frs.—fifteen in all.

A FRENCH COLONIAL.

JAPAN.—Messrs. Butler Bros. have sent me a wedding stamp which was issued during last summer. The umbrella at the top is the imperial crest. In the upper corners is a sprig of pawlonia, in the lower are Chinese characters, representing "Three" in the left-hand, and "Sen" in the right-hand corner. The box inside the oval is said to be covered with red paper, and contains the first letter sent by the bride to the bridegroom. The large box-like object at the back is a table, ornamented round the sides with pictures of cranes and pine trees. The crane is supposed to live a thousand years, and the pine tree never dies — so these are emblematic of long life. On the top of the table are cakes, termed "Mikka yo mobi," or "Three days' and nights' bread," so called because they are left in the bridal chamber for three days and nights after the wedding, so that the bride and bridegroom may eat them whenever they wish. They are made of rice-flour, and there is a cake for each year of the bride's age. Now you will be wanting to know whose wedding these wonderful stamps celebrate, but I can't tell you! 3 sen rose.

JAPANESE WEDDING STAMP.

MALAY STATES.—The accompanying illustra-

tion shows the result of federation in the Malay Peninsula—Perak, Negri Sembilan, Sungei Ujong, and the other Malay States are now federated under the name of the Federated Malay States; thus one issue of stamps replaces several separate issues. A similar transaction is taking place in Australia, and when completed away will go a number of stamps which collectors who have not been on the look out will wish they could get. 10c. lilac and orange, 20c. green and mustard, black surcharge.

MALAY STATES.

ORANGE RIVER COLONY.—Here is an interesting stamp—the first issued in the name of our newly-acquired colony in Africa. The surcharge is in black, 2½d. blue and black.

ORANGE RIVER COLONY. (First issue.)

SAMOA.

SAMOA.—Another German colony, which has been supplied with the same number of stamps as the Caroline Islands.

SWITZERLAND.—Messrs. Butler Bros. have sent me three stamps, issued in celebration of the Jubilee of the Universal Postal Union. I cannot advise young collectors to waste their money on these labels. The 5c. value is illustrated.

JUBILEE OF UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION.

TRANSVAAL.—When Lord Roberts occupied Pretoria the current Transvaal stamps were over-printed "V.R.I." in black. I have seen the following values so treated: ½d., 1d., 2d., 2½d., 3d., 4d. and 6d. This is an interesting series of stamps, which forms a very desirable addition to the album. I would not advise paying high prices for them though, as considerable quantities must be in the market.

TRANSVAAL.

REVIEW.

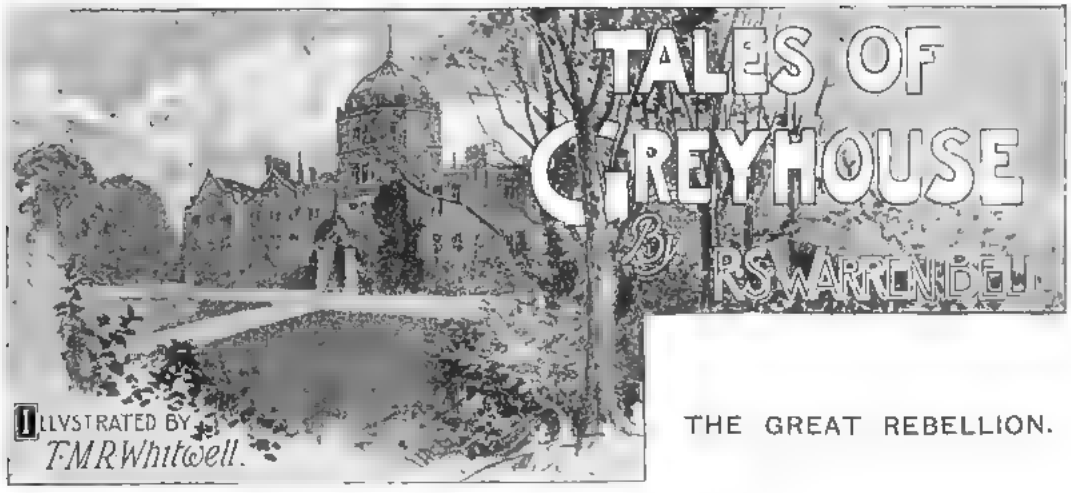
Messrs. Butler Bros., of Clevedon, have sent me two of their well-known "Excelsior" albums, which can be thoroughly recommended to the young collector. The first, price 1s., contains 120 pages, with ruled spaces for stamps, each page headed with illustrations, and populations, coinage, capitals, &c. The whole, bound in a pretty, stiff-boarded cover, forms one of the cheapest shilling albums I have seen.

A larger book, price 2s. 6d., contains spaces for many more stamps, and is all that a beginner can desire. Hints to collectors and a useful perforation gauge are included.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

H. Bradford (NOVA SCOTIA).—I am always glad to hear from colonial correspondents. The stamps you refer to are of no special value, denoting a newspaper tax which has long since been abolished. **W. Grundy** asks me the following questions: (1) How to distinguish *aniline* rose? This can only be done by experience. The aniline ink, however, gives a highly polished surface to the stamp. (2) Are Portuguese colonial stamps, such as Timor, genuine? Yes, certainly, but I cannot advise their purchase. (3) How is it that Thurn and Taxis stamps are sold so cheaply by some dealers? Unused, many of these stamps are cheap, but probably there are reprints or remainders in the market. **"A Queensland Banana."**—The two stamps you send are worth very little, say 1d. each. You omitted the customary stamped addressed envelope. **"Geanot."**—(1) I should say as a stamp, and not for a receipt. (2) Not as a postage stamp; they are used on deeds. (3) No, but you can get a special album now for locals only. (4) Yes, in the first instance, but not in the case of railway or parcels stamps. **"Your Namesake"**—or mine, by the way—asks me how to distinguish the "grille" on American stamps. The "grille" is a small rectangle or square of pin-pricks, and can be best seen by examining the back of the stamp. It was invented as a means of preventing the stamp being cleaned after having passed through the post. You are very wise in putting your spare cash into good stamps, which, as you are careful in what you buy, is only an investment. **H. Beal** wants a good stamp catalogue. Either Messrs. Bright & Sons' "A B C," price 2s. 6d. in one volume, or Messrs. Stanley Gibbons', in three volumes, should suit. See advertisement pages. **Vladivostock.**—The B.C.A. stamp is worth about 5s. to 7s. 6d.; the Chile about 9d. **R. G. J.** wants to know the difference between a forgery and a reprint. The former is manufactured by a private individual, the latter by a Government. Relatively, the value is about the same, although in a *few* cases reprints are highly desirable. **H. J.**—Personally, I think locals are of little interest, but others think differently, and we all get on well together. **Newfoundland.**—See reply to "Your Namesake." **H. Ker-Fox** sends me a rare Bremen stamp for opinion as to genuineness and value. The stamp in question, though a lightly cancelled copy, has two or three *small* tears, and I have advised payment of half catalogue price. This is a good illustration of the positive value of stamps in immaculate condition, and the relative value of poor specimens. If young collectors would insist on fine specimens only, their collections, however much has been spent on them, would never be a disappointment to them.

[N.B.—*Replies per post can only be sent when a stamped addressed envelope is enclosed. A large number of inquiries have been replied to direct.*]



THE GREAT REBELLION.

THE head-master of Greyhouse dies suddenly, and Mr. Forbes, the second master, whose methods of government are extremely tyrannical, is temporarily appointed to fill his place. Much discontent is occasioned, and Bannerman, a Fifth Form boy, organizes a rebellion. Taking advantage of the absence of most of the masters one night, Greyhouse (with the exception of the monitors) break into open mutiny. Just as they have locked themselves into Big School and barricaded the door, Mr. Dodson ("Doddie"), a very popular master, arrives back at the school, and commands Bannerman to open the door. Bannerman emphatically refuses to do so. As he stubbornly adheres to his resolve, the masters and monitors decide to force their way into Big School by one of the windows, but on effecting their purpose they find Big School absolutely empty. At the same time news arrives that the rebels have "occupied" the Pavilion in the playing-fields, while a yawning hole in the floor of Big School indicates how they managed to escape.

CHAPTER V.

SOME few persons—and one of these must have been Bannerman—knew that Greyhouse possessed a subterranean passage—built in the old troublous days, when men had to hide in caves and secret chambers to save themselves from death by stake or axe.

Just such a passage as you may find in many ancient places, existed beneath the Greyhouse monastery. It led to the river, which bounded one side of the playing-fields. The outlet was covered with bushes and grass, and from here, centuries ago, many a hunted Catholic had escaped to the sea coast, twelve miles away.

The entrance to this secret passage, as just a few persons at Greyhouse knew, lay precisely beneath the head-master's desk in Big School.

Setting the fellows to march and sing, Bannerman and some others had gone to work and shifted the desk and platform, and then the planks beneath, thus exposing a yawning hole. And then, as steadily as drilled soldiers, the rebels had gone down into the hole and along that dark and grim underground way, illuminating the gloom with the candles they had procured from the pantry. The passage was substantially built and wholly free from *débris*. The bigger fellows had led the way, and the smaller had followed, and at length all successfully passed, in excellent order, from Big School to the opening by the river bank, whence to the pavilion was a few hundred yards' run.

The masters and monitors gazed speechlessly at the hole's mouth, and Doddie merely shook his head as he admitted that Bannerman was indeed a foe "worthy of his steel."

"Well," he remarked, "I suppose now it must really be a case of starving out. Wonder if they'll parley. We might propose terms that would prove acceptable to them. Who'll take a white flag?"

There was a junior standing near called Perks—a bright-eyed, sturdy young rascal. He had been deemed too small to be taken into Big School with the rest—but Bannerman didn't know what he was leaving behind. Perks was worth his salt, and his keep, even in siege times. He would have dearly liked to have joined in the rebellion, being of an adventurous spirit—but, with a number of other small boys, he had been sent about his business. He was very fond of reading war books, and had made up his mind about two things—firstly, that he would be Captain of Greyhouse, and, secondly, that he would be a soldier. And we may add that in time he achieved both these distinctions.

"Please, sir, let me!" he piped.

Doddie turned round with a laugh, whereat Perks pouted, for his dignity was wounded. Doddie was always very quick to observe when he had hurt the susceptibilities of a boy.

"Right you are," he said; "you shall, Perks. Of course, if they disregard the etiquette of war, and capture you, they'll put you on very short rations," concluded the master with a smile.

But Perks was already knotting his handkerchief on a stick.

"I'm ready now, sir!" he exclaimed. "What shall I say? Shall I demand their surrender?"

"Dear me, what a young warrior it is! No, don't say that. Their reply can be imagined. Ask Bannerman if he will come out and discuss terms with me."

"Yes, sir," and Perks trotted off.

"Hi—stop!" cried Doddie; "they won't see you. Cripps must go with you, with a lantern."

The porter was fetched, but he did not appear to relish his task.

"Suppose the young varmints lay hands on *me?*" he expostulated.

"They won't," replied Mr. Dodson. "Besides, you're going under a flag of truce. We shall follow at some distance, just to see that you return safely."

Cripps got his biggest lantern and gruffly told Perks to "foller."

"The idea!" cried Perks, with his chin up; "you follow me, Cripps. You're afraid, and I'm not, you see."

Then the white flag started on its errand of peace-making. Mr. Forbes had told his colleague to do whatever he thought best, so the parley proposal was quite in order.

Followed at a distance by the masters and monitors, Cripps and Perks walked across the playing-fields and halted within shouting distance of the pavilion. They had already been observed, and numerous chunks of turf came flying to meet them, many derisive voices directing them to "go back" unless they wanted to be flayed alive and submitted to various other tortures.

"I think, sir," said the porter politely, "that we're getting a bit too close—'ang and dash 'em!" as a huge bit of turf knocked his hat off; "they'll kill us for certain. Come back a bit, Mr. Perks, sir!"

"Don't be such a beastly funk, Cripps," said the gallant bearer of the white flag, as he waved the stick above his head. "Nobody would ever think you'd been a London policeman."

"I left the Force as soon as ever I could," returned Cripps, "as I thought being porter at a school for young gentlemen would be a less dangerous job. But I was mistook—drat 'em, there's another!" And there was, for a turflet hit him in the eye that time.

Perks laughed merrily, and this did not increase the porter's good temper.

"For 'eaven's sake say what you've got to say, Mr. Perks," he cried, "and let's be off. This is a gettin' too 'ot for anythink. There! that nearly had the lantern. Go on, sir—'oller at 'em."

So Perks 'ollered:—

"I say, you chaps, don't you see I'm carrying a white flag? I say—I've been sent to speak to you."

"Why, it's that kid Perks!" somebody in the pavilion shouted, and then there came a chorus of hoots, and such exclamations as: "Are all the rest funky?" "Little boys ought to be in bed!" "We'll come out quietly if you won't fire on us!" "Don't be too hard on us, Perky, dear—we're delicate!" and so forth and so on.

Presently Bannermann's deep voice was heard demanding silence. They dried up then.

"What's the matter, Perks?" asked the leader of the rebels.

"I've come with a message," squeaked Perks, trembling a little. He didn't mind the chaff of the Lower Third, but he was talking to the terrible Bannerman himself now.

"Well, let's have your message."

"Mr. Dodson says, will you come out and discuss terms with him?"

There was a tornado of shoutings now. "It's a plot to kidnap Bannerman!" "Don't go, Bannerman!" "Somebody's having us on—Doddie didn't send that message!" "It's a dodge of the Sixth's—three groans for the Sixth!" and the groans were given with great vigour. Following this uproar came sounds of pushing and smacking. Bannerman was merely obtaining silence in a rough and ready way.

"Perks!"

"Yes, Bannerman!"

"Is this all square—were you really told to give me that message?"

"Yes, Bannerman!"

"All right. Then take back this answer: *Mr. Bannerman thanks Mr. Dodson for inviting him to parley, and regrets that he cannot consent to do so unless he is assured that Mr. Forbes will not be the next head-master of Greyhouse*—did you hear?"

"Yes, Bannerman!"

"All right—cut, then."

"Thank goodness that's over!" observed Cripps, as the small boy and the big man wended their way back over the misty meadow. "I got some of that turf in my mouth and down my neck. The young *himps* will get it very, very 'ot for this—oh, think of the birches I'll 'ave to cut!" he concluded joyfully.

The group was awaiting them patiently.

"No go, sir," said Cripps; "seems to me

they've got some drink in there—they're that wild they threw 'arf the field at us!"

Perks delivered Bannerman's reply, word for word.

"So that is the answer," said Doddie; "very well—now to starve them out. We must take turns about, all of us, at watching the pavilion. Phillips—you and the other monitors will watch by sections and see that no food is taken to them. Two of the masters will be with you all the time, to back you up. I just want to speak to Mr. Forbes now."

Two of the masters and half the monitors posted themselves in various places, so that they quite commanded all approaches to the pavilion, both from the school and from the village. It was damp work, and dark work, and hungry work. Meanwhile the others had tea. At the end of an hour the watchers were relieved, and went off to Hall with huge appetites. The uproar in the pavilion continued without intermission—patriotic airs and comic songs strangely intermingling. Various polite speeches were addressed to the monitors, whose forms could be dimly seen; but the watchers preserved a grim silence.

Shortly before the village post office closed for the night Mr. Forbes despatched three telegrams.

out of the job; but Doddie kept them up to it, regularly visiting his outposts and exhorting them to be vigilant. Thus the pavilion was kept under a keen scrutiny. One would have deemed it impossible for any of the rebels to get out unseen, but Bannerman was a strategist of parts, and soon let the besiegers know it.

"I SAY, YOU CHAPS, DON'T YOU SEE I'M CARRYING A WHITE FLAG?"

Presently, as the evening wore on, snow began to fall—first in fluffy trifles, and then in huge flakes that covered the playing-fields as with a great white quilt. The sentinels turned up their coat-collars and wished themselves well

In brief, Bannerman decided to benefit the many by sacrificing the few. Whilst monitors and masters paced up and down in the snow the ringleader of the rioters harangued his men in a low voice.

"Look here, you fellows," he said, "we've about arrived at our last gasp. There's no more grub; if the majority think we'd better chuck up the sponge we'll give in; so will those in favour of capitulation kindly show their grubby fists?"

He looked round. Not a hand was up.

"Come," he went on, "that's better. But, if anyone's wobbling he'd better go, because there's a rough time coming. Mr. Jacobs, did I hear you say that this wasn't good enough?"

All turned towards Jacobs, who writhed uncomfortably beneath the battery of eyes.

"I was feeling beastly peckish," admitted Jacobs.

"We've all been feeling peckish, Mr. Jacobs, ever since we barred ourselves into Big School. There's nothing original in you're feeling that way. I could eat a house, and Limmell has been looking at one or two of our fatter members in a manner that would do credit to a cannibal chief."

"I wish you wouldn't rot," said Limmell, "can't you say at once what the next idea is?"

"Yes, I can," said Bannerman; "it's this: you, Limmell, and eleven other fellows, are to make a sortie from the front of the pavilion. Whether you'll get back will depend on your pace. Judging from your performance in the mile, this year, I fancy you'll be captured, Limmell, my bird."

"Then what's the use of my going at all?" demanded Limmell.

"You needn't unless you like; but hear my plan first."

There were spy-holes all over the pavilion, and Bannerman closely inspected the enemy through these before he proceeded. Nobody was near enough to overhear him.

"The sortie in front is to draw them off from the back. As soon as you are well engaged, another party of six is to nip out at the back—where we have loosened the panels—and cut for their lives down to the village, each taking a separate route and meeting at Mother Cadby's. From mother they will purchase as many sixpenny cakes—those being the most filling things I can think of—as they can—say six each—and return as warily as possible. Two of the biggest can put on these umpire's coats, so as to look as white as possible against the snow, like the old girl in history who escaped across a frozen river, don't you know. Now then, I want volunteers for the village, and for the sortie. Anybody willing to run a big risk for the general good will kindly exhibit his knuckles."

Without hesitation every fellow present put up his hand.

"Excellent!" cried Bannerman, and proceeded to choose for the village the fleetest runners serving beneath his banner. Then he selected the party for the sortie—cunningly selecting the fellows whom he had cause to suspect of faint-heartedness, and of whom he knew he would be well rid, as they would not have much stomach for the fighting that was bound to come sooner or later.

"When we let you out," instructed Bannerman, "spread out—so as to look as many as possible. We'll help you with a little shouting, so as to bring up all the fellows at the back. When I give the word," he added, turning to the cake-fetchers, "you skunk off along the palings. When you reach the road you can cut for all you're worth. Now then, all ready?"

He opened the door, and out shot the unfortunate victims who were to draw the enemy's fire, as it were. Simultaneously, the rest of the fellows set up a wild hallooing, and effectually brought all the besiegers behind the pavilion to the front.

Limmell and his merrie men scattered in all directions, and pelted off for their lives. This was just what the monitors and masters wanted; they greeted the sortie with cheers as vigorous as those which the besieged were uttering, and gave chase with such speed that nine of the "sortie" were caught and "held" before they had covered 50yds. The other three gave the besiegers a great run; two of them finally being cornered at the far end of the fields, and the third making such a nimble and dexterous circuit that he was at the very door of the pavilion, absolutely pumped and done, when three of the more weakly monitors, who had been waiting for him, pounced upon him and bore him to the ground.

"To the rescue, Greyhouse!" yelled Bannerman, dashing out into the snow, and bowling over the crack "maths" man of the school as easily as he would have sent a ninepin down.

Those of the besiegers who were not engaged in holding prisoners rushed up to save their comrades; but, other rebels issuing to Bannerman's help, these fresh assailants were beaten off, and the three weakly monitors were actually dragged into the pavilion—prisoners of war!

Then the door was banged to and bolted, just as Doddie furiously flung himself against it.

"Gentlemen," said Bannerman, addressing the three monitors, "if you give me your word of honour that you will not attempt to escape we will not bind you. Furthermore, we hope to ask you to join us at supper, consisting of best Cadby cake, so soon as our six foragers arrive back from the village."

The three crestfallen members of the Sixth gave their word, and were retained on parole.

"Now," said Bannerman, "all we can do is to sit on our haunches and wait for the cake. Suppose we have a song, by way of keeping our spirits up? Mr. Jenkins, will you oblige?"

Mr. Jenkins was no other than one of the captured monitors, and those without experienced the unexpected pleasure of listening whilst he gave voice to a rollicking ditty for the benefit of his captors.

CHAPTER VI.

Six breathless boys dashed up to Mother Cadby's cottage in Greyhouse village, and without ceremony belaboured her door with their toes, and heels, and fists. "Mother Cadby's" was out of bounds, and because she was out of bounds Greyhouse delighted much in purchasing tuck of her. Everything that she vended was home-made with a vengeance—her cakes—penny, threepenny, and sixpenny—were huge, and warm, and indigestible; but to the average Grey's stomach they were dreams of delight—they were so "filling." The present writer has wallowed greedily in Cadby cake; years ago, in darkened dormitory, he used to recline on elbow and gnaw Cadby cake. Since then he has tasted many good things, at home and abroad, but never does he remember having demolished with his teeth anything a quarter so good as a sixpenny Cadby cake. Oh, happy schoolboy days! To devour a mound of Cadby cake and fall asleep, and wake up feeling as fit as a fiddle! What would he not give now to be able to do that!

The school shop, situated in the upper playing field, was supposed to provide most things in the way of tuck; but to the gourmand Grey its cake fell far below, in point of size and taste, that purveyed by Mother Cadby. But, because she had given "tick," and encouraged fellows to mortgage their pocket-money, she—her cottage, as we have said—had been placed "out of bounds." It was known that she had made a tidy penny out of the school. In the summer time she sold ginger-beer, and tea, and watercress to cyclists—hence the old dame was able to lend money occasionally at exorbitant interest. This habit of hers had come to the ears of the authorities, so that she was doubly and with good reason barred from Greyhouse custom. To deal with her meant an interview with the Head. Here, then, hammering at her door at ten o'clock at night, stood six candidates for a birching.

Mother Cadby had retired to bed, but the hoofing on her panels brought her out of that snug retreat with a vicious snap of the two teeth that still remained to her.

"What is it?" she screeched from the window.

"Come down, mother! We want some cake!"

"Cake! The idea! Go away and let an old woman have her lawful sleep!"

"If you don't open the door we'll break it open!" observed the leader of the party.

Mother was heard to make some observations of an uncomplimentary nature, alluding darkly to "the lor" as a means of protection, but she probably saw her way to turning an honest penny out of her visitors—she had recognized them as Greys for she slipped on her dress, wrapped a shawl round her lean shoulders, and admitted them.

"Good old mother—come on, all the cakes you have, and look sharp!"

Bannerman had given the leader of the foraging party a couple of sovereigns, and these coins were now displayed to mother's greedy eyes.

"All the stuff you've got—quickly—and this for it!"—displaying a gold coin.

"Oh, why didn't you tell me you was coming?" moaned mother; "I'd have made a pile of things! As it is, I've not more than twelve six pennies, and——"

"Out with them! Move about, mother—there's a darling! Mother, you *are* looking pretty to-night! Got a sack or something to put them in?"

"Oh, dear, don't worrit, and I'll do what I can. Here's the sixpennies——"

With a sound that closely resembled the howl of a famished wolf on the approach of a plump traveller, one of the party made a grab at the nearest cake. The leader thrust him back roughly.

"Steady, man—remember the other chaps. We'll all start fair on them when we get back. Now, ma, anything else? Loaves, meat, apples—anything?"

The result of this exhortation was that the foraging party fairly stripped mother's modest shop of everything it contained—not excepting the rock and bull's-eyes. Mother charged them another sovereign for this clean sweep—and was handsomely paid at that.

When she had routed out all her bags and baskets Mother Cadby prepared the articles for safe porterage, and at length was able to close the door on her customers..

"It's dreadful doin's as I hears you're up to," was her final speeeh to them, "murderin' the masters and turning the school into a fair pandemingium, and it's aidin' an' abettin' you, I am, but a pore old woman must live——"

"And the 'pore old woman' knows how to charge, too," was the leader's curt interruption. "Never mind—cheer up, mother, and bake some more cakes."

"That I will," muttered mother, as she tottered up to bed again, "an' I wish there was a pandemingium there every day, I do, if it brought in such as this reg'lar," she concluded, as she stowed the gold away in an old stocking.

The adventurous six found themselves in the midst of a blinding snowstorm. As they crossed the main road they heard the sound of voices beyond the curve of the high hedge-row.

"Quick—hide!" whispered the leader, and without hesitation the party concealed themselves in the nearest private garden.

And not a moment too soon, for round the corner, with a sturdy swing, came twenty-four policemen. Mr. Forbes had despatched three telegrams at seven o'clock; this was the answer to one of them. They were constables from the neighbouring manufacturing town of Petershall. A considerable force was always kept there on account of the turbulent ways of the factory hands, so that, on a snowy night, when all was quiet in the town, a couple of dozen men were easily spared. They were tramping up from the station towards the main entrance of the school, and from the way they laughed and talked it was apparent that they anticipated an easy task. A parcel of school boys—pooh! It would be a picnic.

Hardly daring to breathe, the six foragers watched them pass; then out of the garden, down a bye-lane, and swiftly along by the high palings which bordered the playing-fields! So cautious was their approach, and so thick the fall of snow, that they were undetected by the patrolling masters and monitors. Bannerman was awaiting their arrival anxiously enough by the loosened panels.

"Hurrah! Here's the cake. By Jove, you've done your work well! Now, you chaps, stand back, and I'll deal out to each man his share!"

While rebellious Greyhouse munched, the foragers informed Bannerman of the arrival of the police from Petershall.

"What! Bobbies! Oh, what a spree! We'll roll 'em in the snow and bag their helmets! Lucky you saw them, by Jupiter! We'll be ready for them! Now, men, hurry up and finish the grub—the police have arrived, and they'll be at us in a few minutes."

The Police!

The announcement thrilled the rebels with a burning desire for action. They were cramped and cold and longing for something to do. Bannerman hastily consulted with the Fifth.

"There's plenty of snow," he said, "so make snowballs, all you kids, and place them ready for us to throw. Break those panels right out at the back—never mind the measly monitors—they won't hurt you. Now then, everybody begin. No stones, but make them as hard as you can. We'll greet them with a volley, and then rush 'em."

Everybody felt that the crisis of the rebellion was at hand. There was to be a hand-to-hand fight; police, masters, and monitors on one side—themselves on the other. The prospect was most warming in such chilly weather, and the kids worked with a will at the snowballs, finishing them off with a rotundity and a hardness that boded ill for the gentlemen in blue that they were to be shied at. Nearly all the eleven were in the pavilion, and they could all throw hard and straight. Throwing was an athletic practice much in vogue at Greyhouse. The pile of snowballs rose; the cold was such that there was no chance of their melting. Bats, stumps, and all the weapons were ranged ready to grasp.

All was ready.

And none too soon, for, as Bannerman was supervising the drawing of all the bolts which fastened down the shutters, the police entered the playing-fields and advanced through the foot-deep snow in the direction of the pavilion.

"Lie low," said Bannerman. "When I give the word, whip up the shutters and let them have it hot"

Silently and steadily the constables from Petershall came up to the attack. They were headed by Doddie and an inspector. When the party was within 50yds. of the pavilion it was joined by the patrolling masters and monitors, by Cripps, and by the other men-servants attached to Greyhouse. Mr. Forbes, wrapped up to the eyes, watched the proceedings from a sheltered nook near the stable.

The strength of the attacking force could be clearly seen from the pavilion; the dark forms of the constables appearing black and bulky against the smooth mantle of snow that lay around and about them.

The force was divided—the inspector leading one half, Doddie the other. With the exception of calling out the military, this was the most stern and drastic measure that could have been taken under the circumstances. Mr. Forbes and his colleagues were determined to quell the insurrection by striking a hard and sudden blow—but the police had been warned to be careful with their truncheons, using them, as far as possible, for defence only.

They advanced again—steadily, silently.

Forty, thirty, twenty yards.

THE CRASH OF THE OPPOSING BODIES WAS STUPENDOUS, FOR THE MUTINOUS GREYS WENT FOR THE POLICE LIKE LIVE LOGS.

Up went the shutters simultaneously, and out flew a cloud of hard, compact, well-aimed snowballs.

This sudden fusilade was absolutely unexpected, and threw the attacking party into disorder. However gallant you may be, it is difficult to fight clear-headedly with an eye bunged up and your mouth full of snow.

"Steady, my lads——" began the inspector; but at that moment a swiftly-hurled snowball came home under his right ear and sent him staggering back into the arms of his men.

But the check in the advance was only temporary. Irritated beyond measure by the unceasing shower of cold missiles, the police gave vent to a series of forcible ejaculations and sprang forwards.

Then the flight of snowballs stopped as suddenly as it had started, and the rebels—headed by Bannerman—dashed out to meet the foe.

The crash of the opposing bodies was stupendous, for the mutinous Greys went for the police like bulldogs.

Whack—thump—rap—bang! went the drill sticks and stumps against the helmets and coats of the constables. It was blow for blow, hard breathing, and hard fighting—a small band of big men against a mob of boys. Shouts rang out on the night air—cries of pain, yells of triumph.

Here you could see a burly one in blue struggling with three boys, and there a master fighting manfully against overwhelming odds. A score or two of Greys were rolling about in the snow—having been roughly clutched and slung over by the muscular guardians of the peace, and all the time the banging and whacking and thumping went on with unabated fury.

It was clear to Mr. Forbes, anxiously awaiting the issue on the other side of the field, that *his* side was gradually getting the worst of it. How could it be otherwise? Two hundred against fifty—four to one!

Suddenly Bannerman's voice rang out, high above the din of battle.

"Back to the pavilion—they're barring us out!"

It was true. Doddie and Phillips had conceived the idea of closing down all the shutters and locking the door on the rioters, and were only just perceived in time.

Leaving thirty or forty of their number inextricably mixed up with the attacking party, the main body of Greys retired hastily to their stronghold. Phillips and Mr. Dodson, struggling heroically, were pitched out into the snow; the shutters were closed down, and the bolts shot into their sockets. For a few moments the door was left open for stragglers—then that was shut.

The brief *mêlée* was at an end. The police had been too hustled and battered to be in a mood to fight any more

The inspector drew off his men, and Doddie his, taking the prisoners with them. Soon the fields were empty. There was no more patrolling. The assailants were fairly beaten.

"*What next?*"

This was the question the victorious Greys put to themselves. At any rate, whatever happened, they were all in it.

"*What next?*"

All through the night, damp, shivering, miserable, but undaunted, the Greys watched and waited for a fresh attack.

But none came. The police had returned to Petershall, and when dawn broke Bannerman and his men found themselves masters of the situation.

And now—how would it end?

CHAPTER VII.

About breakfast time, when the famished boys in the pavilion were devouring what scraps of food remained, the lookout on the balcony announced that the enemy was again approaching.

Immediately the balcony was crowded with fellows.

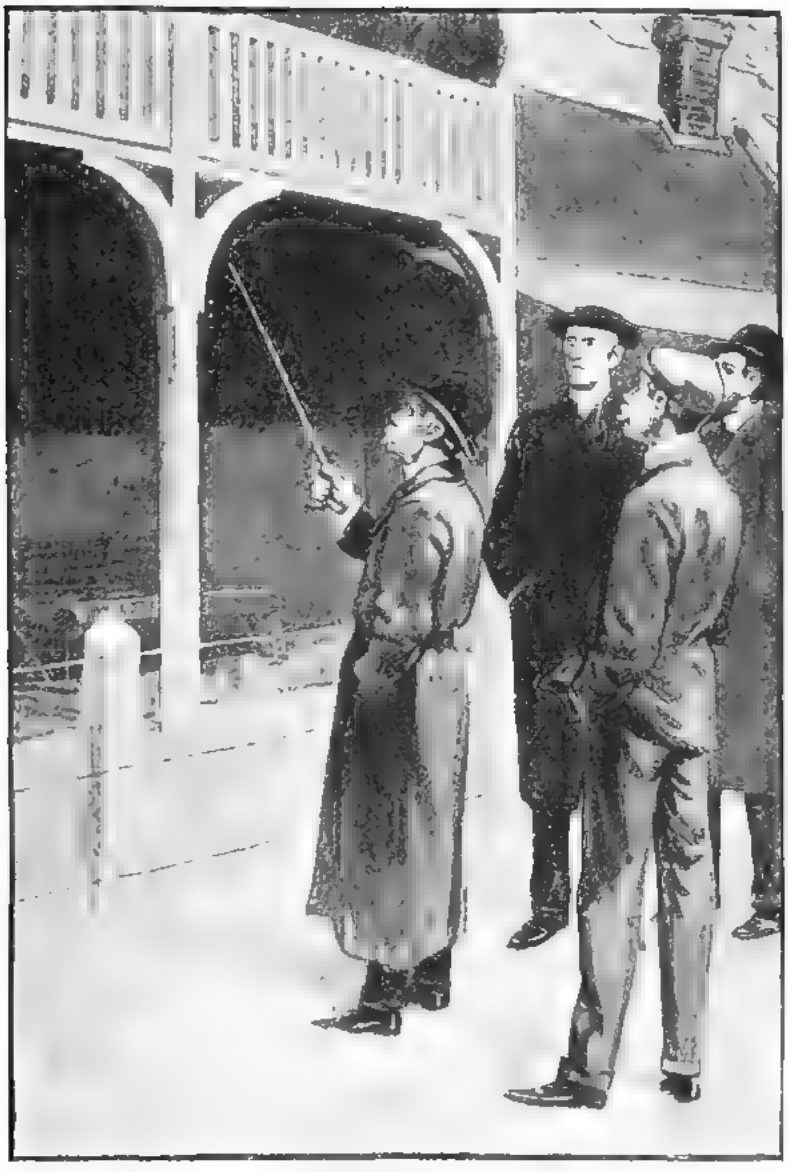
The enemy? Hardly. Seen approaching was a party of four—Mr. Forbes, Mr. Dodson, a tall stranger, and an erect, military-looking old gentleman, not at all big, but just now looking very stern and grieved.

He had a kindly face—the little white tuft under his lower lip adding strength to a strong chin; the eyes shining fearlessly beneath broad, level brows. Those eyes had gazed on scenes too horrible to describe; had wandered pitifully over heaps of dying and dead - in times of real warfare.

Now, on this miniature battlefield, those kind, strong eyes beheld—a pavilion, holding a mob of refractory schoolboys.

As the party drew nearer, the boys recognized the old gentleman with the brave eyes. He was the Governor of the School Committee—the most brilliant son Greyhouse ever gave to the world. He was, in short, a gentleman whom every Grey held in the highest honour. He was Field-Marshal Lord Chilvers, V.C., as much the idol of the public as he was of the school which had bred him.

The four gentlemen stopped within a few paces of the pavilion. The old field-marshal lifted his stick.



"OPEN THIS DOOR!"

"Open this door!"

He was obeyed—by Bannerman, who came out into the snow with his head bared.

Lord Chilvers gazed at him with interest.

"Your name is Bannerman, is it not?"

"Yes, my lord."

"You organized this business?"

"I did."

"Why?"

"Because, sir, we did not wish Mr. Forbes to be appointed head-master."

"That was hardly a good reason. It was never the governors' intention to appoint Mr. Forbes to the vacancy. This is your new head-master," indicating the tall stranger by his side, "he came down with me this morning."

Silently the erstwhile rioters gazed on their new Head—a handsome, scholarly-looking man in the prime of life. They saw at once that he was "the right sort"—he was every inch a Head worthy of Greyhouse.

It was not long before they knew that Dr. Gregory was not only a famous scholar, but a "double blue" into the bargain, he having represented his 'varsity in cricket and football for three successive years. Whereat Greyhouse rejoiced.

But Lord Chilvers is still standing in the snow.

"Let everybody assemble in the big schoolroom," he said, turning away.

Twenty minutes later the great soldier stood by the rostrum — now occupied by the new Head—and faced Greyhouse.

He made a little speech. He told them, briefly, that it cut him to the heart to find his old school rebelling against those set in authority over them. No excuse could be offered—none would be accepted. The ring-leaders would be expelled. The holidays would be cut short by one week, and during the Lent Term there would be no extra holidays whatever.

"My boys—boys of my dear old school," he concluded, "I believe you regret your action. You were, I grant, led away by your elders, but you are still to blame. I ask you, in the future,

by hard work and good conduct to do all you can to wipe away this blot on the fair fame of Greyhouse School."

Thus ended the great rebellion. The ring-leaders went that day—the worst of the Fifth. Bannerman, to his surprise and disgust, was sent by his grandfather, "Sir Jim," to one of the strictest schools in Germany—a school conducted by ex-army officers, whose discipline was of the severest.

But Lord Chilvers had not forgotten him, and when, on his year of penance expiring, Bannerman returned to England, Lord Chilvers advised him to enter the army, and ever afterwards took the kindliest interest in his career.

"He's a bit of a rascal," he said to "Sir Jim," "but he's a born fighter." *Verb. sap.*

THE END.

Warren Bell

ESSAY ON NATURAL HISTORY.

BY A HIGH SCHOOL GIRL.

IT has been said that the modern girl knows absolutely nothing of natural history; to disprove this calumny, I send for your perusal a specimen essay by a High School girl:—

The *sloth* is one of the animal kingdom; it is also invertebrate, which means that it walks on its back; this method of locomotion is far from rapid. The sloth, or A 1, is so called because it has three toes; how these three members are disposed on the four legs and tail has not yet been discovered. The sloth is distantly related to a bishop. The voice of this bird is not infrequently heard near the amazon, a membrane covering the wind-pipe.

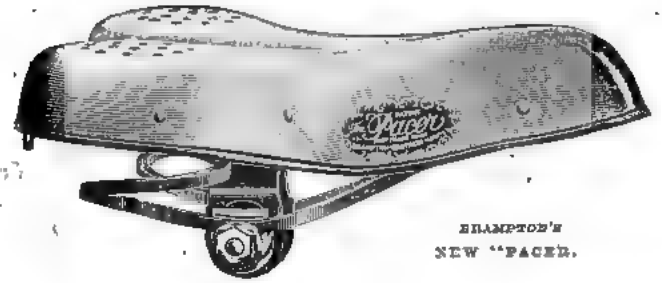
The *camel* is called the "Ship of the Desert"; this alludes to its amphi-theatrical qualities (living on air and water). The camel is the natural friend of man; it has on its back a spontaneous saddle, and some camels are even made to ride double—*e.g.*, the bacterian camel. The camel is better off than the sloth, for it has two toes to each foot. The camel is highly civilized; we get from its hairs the camels' hair-brushes; it carries water for a long time by an ingenious contrivance of its own, from which man has derived the idea of the camera. The chief food of the camel is the camellia, which insect is bred in large herds in Portugal, and exported to Italy, where the camels reside.

PUZZLE: FIND THE MOUSE.
Photograph by W. Cross, Liverpool.

The study of fish is called "Otology"; the specimen fish generally chosen for description is the *otter*. The otter is found on the banks of the Ottava Rima; it lives in a very warm place, and has been bred successfully at a temperature of 260 fair in height and the same in breadth; it is always crying for more warmth, hence its name. The otter has one horn on its beak, and is, in fact, the fabulous and extinctive unicorn. Charles III. had been surrounded by the Moors at Whitstable; almost surrendering, he was suddenly joined by a flock of otters, who rushed upon the Persians and expelled them; the motto of Charles was "Superia dosset" (experience teaches), and that of his opponents, "Hen hem" (you had him there). The otter cannot sing, but whistles; it is, therefore, otiose. The chief food of the otter is the blubber, or tears of the whale.

"EYED AWEY."

CONCERNING CYCLE SADDLES.

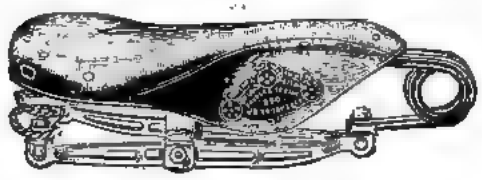


BRAMPTON'S NEW "PACER."

By HAYDON PERRY.

CYCLE saddles have, in their comparatively short history, passed through an extraordinary number of changes as regards almost every detail of their form, size, weight, and even the materials of which they have been constructed, to say nothing of the varying fashions of adjusting their position with regard to the rest of the machine.

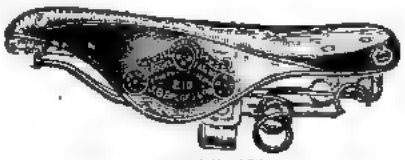
Those who remember the early bone-shakers, or who have opportunity of examining a good specimen to-day, will be familiar with the lumpy and ungainly cushion which in those far-off times did duty for a seat. It may have absorbed much of the painful vibration which was set up between the road and the iron tyre of the period; but at the best it was a highly uncomfortable perch, and nothing but the strange fascination of the new and scarce comprehended art of curvetting and wobbling about on wheels induced men to endure the discomforts of sitting upon it. When, by greatly enlarging the front wheel and reducing the back one, the tall "spider" was evolved, the bicycle became for the first time a practical vehicle for the purposes of



BROOKS' "B20."

touring and travelling. Necessity goaded the genius of the inventor, and saddles of various shapes, all of them based upon the form of the saddle used in horse-back riding, but all of them greatly modified to meet the needs of the new position, became general.

Some of the lessons learnt in those first days

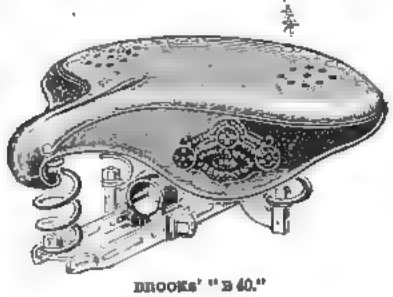


BROOKS' "B10."

of touring stand as good to-day as ever they did, and many of the modern makers of new saddles which are not successes really owe their failure to a lack of knowledge of, or a disregard for, the principles then discovered. It was found, for example, that what had seemed the most obvious way of making a saddle comfortable, namely, the cushioning of it, was really the surest way of banishing ease altogether in the long run. For this there is a sound physiological reason. The functions of the bones are twofold: they are designed to support the outer organisms and to serve as a protection for the inner; and these dual functions they are able to perform at rest in a variety of postures as well as during the progress of many forms of motion. If you lie upon the floor you will find that the bulk of your weight is supported by the bony parts which protrude near the surface of the body—the skull, the shoulders, and so forth. Nature in this way protects the softer and more delicate internal organs from a pressure which they are unfitted to bear. It is for this reason that boys are not given feather beds at school, but stiffish mattresses instead. The feather bed is no luxury, except to him who by "using" himself to it has learnt to like it and want it. The principle that applies to the bed applies equally to the chair. There are, it is true, some people who cannot sit at ease except upon cushions.

BROOKS' "B28" FOR LADIES.

but they are not the young, the vigorous, and the healthy. To these latter the simple rule of anatomy still applies, that the weight should



BROOKS' "B 40."

be carried mainly by the bones. Luxurious upholstery has been tried in schools, and has failed miserably. This was because it took a portion of the weight of the body off the two ischial bones provided by nature to sustain it, and injuriously distributed it elsewhere. Those who studied the experiment found that the standard of attention was lowered and the alertness of thought became less. Hence the school desk and the plain office chair are the best seats to work upon.

What the early cyclists discovered was only a new application of this rule. They said: "The hard saddle is the long-distance saddle." Now, it is not to be supposed that the saddles of that day, even when they conformed to this essential requirement, were at all comfortable. Generally speaking, they were quite otherwise. But that was because makers had not mastered the art of building them upon a proper under-seating of springs. To absorb vibration by means of cushions is one thing; to intercept it before it reaches the saddle at all is quite

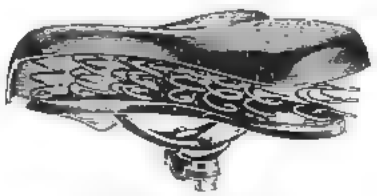
BRAMPTON'S "MULTISPIRAL."
(Under view.)

another. The first plan I have shown to be essentially bad; the second is on every score desirable. When one remembers the bumping and rattling endured in the course of a hundred mile run in the early '80's it seems wonderful that tourists were found to persevere as they did. The explanation is that the delights of wheeling were such as to far outweigh its pains and inconveniences. Just as fellows used to deny themselves all sorts of things — new cricket bats, holiday trips, and a whole host of minor *desiderata*— in order that they might be able to spend £20 upon a machine which, even if in good order, would not to-day sell for as many sixpences, so, having at last possessed themselves of the prize, they felt that any further sacrifice in the way of constraint or discomfort endured was as nothing when weighed in the balance against the inherent enjoyments and delights of cycling.

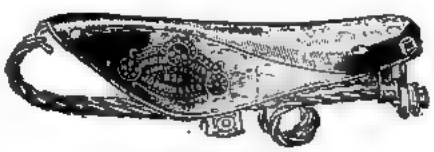
BRAMPTON'S "3-COIL" SADDLE.

All the early tourists were enthusiasts. The refinements of luxury in later times have brought many into the ranks who are not enthusiasts, and possibly even some who will never become so. There is no great call upon the beginner's enthusiasm nowadays, when the pneumatic tyre absorbs nearly all the vibration at its source of origin, namely, the point of contact between the wheel and the road, and when such little as escapes beyond this point through the framework of the machine is almost entirely intercepted by suitable springs before it can reach the rider's saddle.

It is not my intention to recommend any one particular seat, for reasons that will be apparent, but rather to speak of the qualities which are essential to every good saddle, to show how each may determine what is a good saddle *for him*, and how, having once got hold of the right



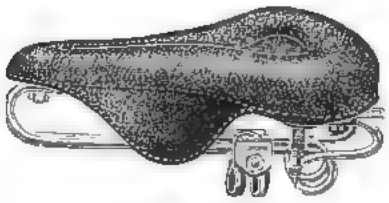
BRAMPTON'S "MULTISPIRAL."



BROOKS' "B 28."

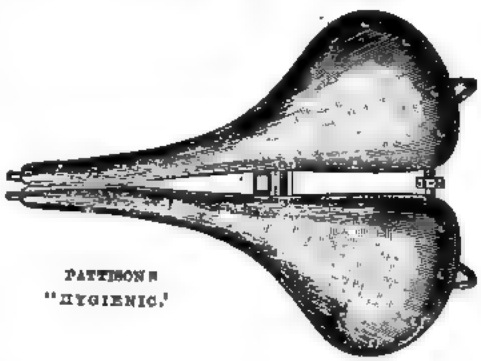
one, he can adjust it to his best advantage. First of all, then, every saddle that is worth having is so constructed as to take practically

all of the rider's weight by pressure from the two ischial bones before mentioned. It must afford no support at the peak, and it must be so



LAMPLUGH SADDLE.

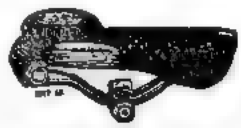
shaped that the play of the thighs can go on with a free up-and-down thrust and without friction. To attain these ends the saddle must be fairly flat, and provided with means of adjustment such that it may remain so even after considerable use. It must also be broad enough at the back—a matter in which many otherwise good saddles are lacking; and it must be well scooped out at the "crutch," because, unlike a chair, it is intended to seat the rider while his legs are dependent in a direction approaching that of vertically downward. As to the proper width of the seat at the back, where the main pressure should come, that must always depend upon the individual. Personally, I like a saddle to be not less than 8ins. across, but some require it to be much wider, while others can do with less. The length of the peak is a matter of very small importance so long as it is correctly formed. It should not be raised convexly, or there will be danger of its taking a portion of the weight. Some makers recognize this risk and build the peak depressed below the general level of the seat, while others —such as the makers of the "Sans-bec"—do away with the peak altogether. This, however, is not necessary, provided the seat be made firm and flat, and provided, also, that it be properly adjusted.



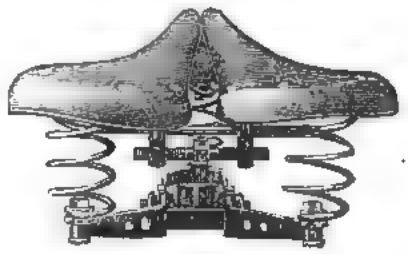
PATTISON'S "HYGIENIC."

WOOD'S SADDLE. (With cover.)

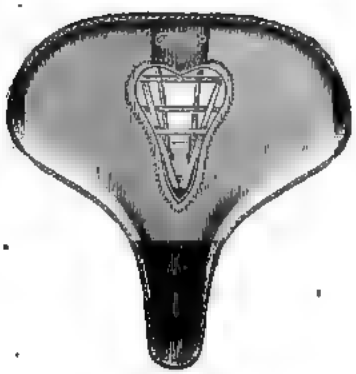
There are some riders who are never comfortable unless their saddle-peak is tilted upwards. This nearly always arises from the fact that the whole seat is adjusted too far forward on the machine. Slide it back a little, and the need for tilting vanishes. That naturally brings me to the subject of the position of the saddle. Writers on the subject usually state it as being such and such a number of inches behind the crank centre, which is right enough as far as it goes. But they nearly always name the peak as the point to take the measurement from, and this is unscientific and inaccurate. Peaks may be of all sorts of lengths, or, as we have just seen, there may be no peak at all. To apply the rule usually given to all cases would be nothing more than insisting upon a different rule for each varying make of saddle. That, of course, would be absurd. The proper place from which to measure is that point in the seat which lies midway between the points which carry the weight. In my own case I like this to be about 12ins. behind the crank centre, or if anything rather more. But one's individual build has something to do with this. What is called the "personal equation" comes in, and probably the biggest factor in it is the length of the femur, or thigh bone. Pay no heed, therefore, to anyone who lays down a rule absolute for all cases, but find out the best position for yourself. Remember, however, that the shifting and tilting of the saddle will alter the reach, and that the proper reach is a fixed and unalterable quantity for each individual. Changes in saddle adjustment should therefore be compensated for by slight changes in the adjustment of the seat-pillar, so as always to maintain the correct length



THE "WOOD'S" SADDLE.

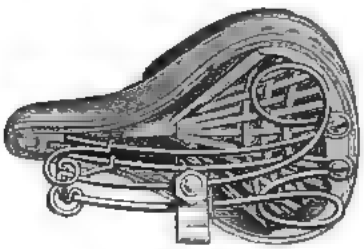


PATTISON SADDLE. (Back view.)



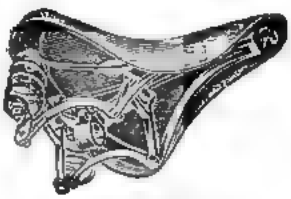
HUNT'S SADDLE.

of reach. The amount of this reach that is best for you is easily determined by taking a "fork measurement." A rider's fork measurement is taken inside the leg, from the fork to the ground when he is standing erect upon shoeless feet. A saddle should be so placed that this measurement is exactly the distance from the line of support near the back of it straight to the pedal, when the latter is at its greatest distance away, that is to say, when it is nearly at the bottom of the stroke.

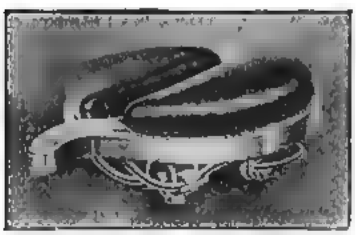


HUNT'S SADDLE.
(Under view.)

From the foregoing it will be readily understood that many types of saddle may fulfil all the requirements of a riding seat, at once serviceable, comfortable, and hygienic. The illustrations to this article show quite a number of appliances to which such a description can justly be applied. Messrs. Brooks & Co., of Great Charles Street, Birmingham, are, perhaps, the best-known makers of cycle saddles in the country. The variety of makes they have to offer is such that few riders would fail to be able to make a suitable selection from among them. The "B 10" is a road-racing saddle, hung on figure-of-eight springs. The "B 28" saddles and the "B 90" are also made for the road, while the "B 40" is a full roadster saddle with a specially wide back. The Christie "Adjustable" saddle provides for the widening of the back to the exact breadth the rider may discover suitable to him. But the name of the Christie firm was made by the introduction of their "Anatomical," which provides a seat in accordance with the first principle insisted upon here. Messrs. Pattison, of 86, New Bond Street, W., with their "Hygienic" saddle, achieve much the same result. The "Esmond" saddle, which comes from Nos. 10 & 12, Eastcheap, London, E.C., aims at giving comfort to the rider by providing him with a seat endowed with abundant side-sway, so that it see-saws with each alternate stroke. The device has to be got used to before it can be appreciated, but many who have learnt to feel at home on it prefer it to all others. Springs play an important part in nearly all saddles, save those destined for use only on the racing track. The figures of the Brampton saddles, which are made at the works in Oliver Street, Birmingham, illustrate several different types of springs. In the "three-coil," for example, a very usual method is seen, while the "Multispiral" is a very elastic seat, of which the comfort is enhanced by the breadth of back and the good design of the scooping out on either side of the peak. The "New Pacer," again, is an exceedingly firm seat, supported by a minimum of springs, and suitable for work on the racing path. Another very old firm in the cycle-saddle line is that of Messrs. Middlemore & Lamplugh, of Coventry. Good points about the example of their saddles shown are the hollow down the centre of the seat and the nice deep



"ESMOND" SADDLE.
(Under view.)



CHRISTIE'S "ANATOMICAL."

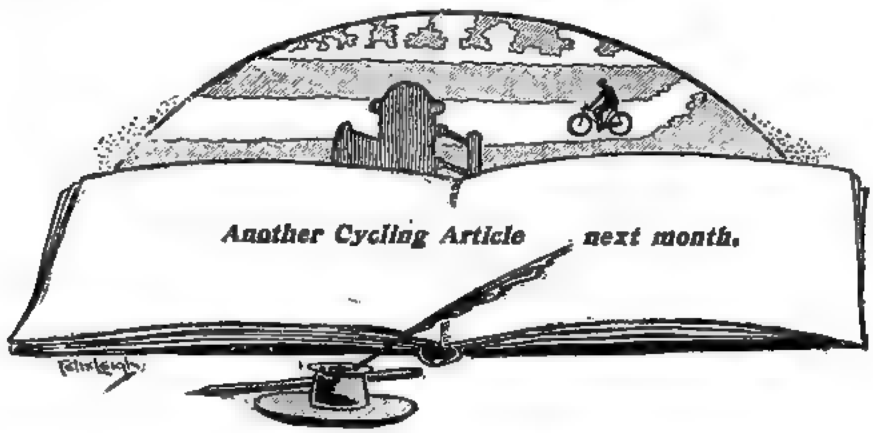
CHRISTIE'S "ADJUSTABLE."

flaps on either side of the peak. I believe this firm were the first to introduce the long "hammock" saddles which were in great vogue years ago, on account of the ease and comfort they gave at a time when these characteristics were not obtainable in other ways.

Many makers now hollow out the centre line of their saddles, partly to obviate all chance of pressure, and partly for purposes of ventilation and coolness. Hunt's saddle, an American production, has the central portion of open laced work, while strong, taut thongs of leather support the under portion. The "St. Crispin" is an excellent saddle, with a flat canvased top, and a speciality in adjustment such that its flatness can be permanently assured. Instead of tightening a single screw the user of the "St. Crispin" tightens three, a central one and one at each corner of the seat backing. Uniform tension can thus be imparted to the whole fabric. It was until of late years a saying particularly applicable to cycle saddles, that there was "nothing like leather." Now, however, a number of other materials have been employed with more or less success as substitutes to form the upper covering. Of these perhaps the most promising is woven wire. In this connection "Wood's Wire Saddle," made by the Longford Wire Co., of Warrington, was a pioneer. The company were also pioneers in an admirable trade custom, in which they now have many imitators. I refer to the practice of allowing intending purchasers a month's free trial of their saddle—a fine testimony to their own confidence in their wares, and a great boon to those who, while difficult to suit in the matter of seats, may still be pardoned for reluctance to go to the cost of experimenting with continual new purchases until the right article has been discovered. One of the latest comers in the way of wire saddles is the "Metallic," made in eight varieties by the Metallic Saddle Co., of 18, Ludgate Hill, Birmingham. It is open down the centre, and the lines of stress in the wire webbing are such that the seat becomes flatter the moment the rider's weight is superimposed. The saddle is well ventilated, cool, and light, and the wire fabric is so woven as to present a practically smooth surface, friction between which and the cloth of a garment is practically prevented by the give of the whole surface with the rider's motions.

THE "METALLIC" SADDLE.
Made by the Metallic Saddle Company, Birmingham.

With so large a variety of saddles to select from the most fastidious cyclist should be able to find a seat to his liking. I venture to believe that those who have hitherto been unable to do so have not gone upon the principles here enunciated, and I think that if they will be careful to do so now, they will succeed in finding the comfort they have before been at a loss for, and will in a surprising degree increase the pleasure that cycling is able to afford them.

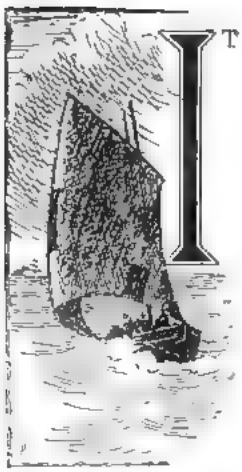


BELOW THE SALT.

A Naval Yarn of the Early 'Eighties.

By Charles Gleig. Illustrated by E. F. Skinner.

I.



IT was high noon, and the gun-room officers of the cruiser *Porcupine* were at dinner. The ship being in port, the scuttles were open to admit light and air. The gun-room of the *Porcupine* measured 20ft. by 7ft.—a space considered adequate for the accommodation of two sub-lieutenants, a dozen midshipmen, and a fat clerk.

A narrow table ran fore and aft, the head of which was occupied by the senior member of the mess, Sub-Lieutenant Durrant, who was also the caterer. On his right sat the other sub, Webley by name; and the middies, who varied in age between sixteen and twenty, sat anyhow.

Sometimes they scrambled for places and broke crockery in the process. It was a strategical advantage to sit near the carver, though Durrant, who ruled the mids with a dirk-scabbard, was unpopular. Close proximity to Durrant gave better scope for the rejection of bad helpings.

The steward stood at Durrant's elbow, and waited upon the two subs. The cloth was much stained by splashes of beer and gravy. Webley, who was very refined and played the flute, often said that he would much rather eat with hogs than with midshipmen.

"Dishclout soup again!" grumbled one of the middies. "Take the muck away, steward, and give me a bottle of beer."

The steward, a sensitive man with a weakness for hair-oil, looked hurt. "You can't 'ave *h*any more beer, Mr. 'Aughton; your wine bill is *h*up."

"Take my plate away, too," said the fat clerk piteously.

Durrant rose and sharply rapped the table with the ladle. He spoke in menacing tones, but without raising his voice: "Any further criticism of the soup," he said, "I shall regard as a personal insult."

He paused, but the middies were silent. The younger ones made a show of sipping the unpalatable mixture.

"By the way," continued Durrant, "I am to tell you that the captain has ordered the two assistant engineers to join this mess. The captain desires that Messrs. Tibbs and Noakes shall be treated with civility. If they have reason to complain of any rudeness from you midshipmen you'll all get what for from *me*. That's all. Steward, bring the joint."

The midshipmen exchanged glances and whispers. The announcement caused much surprise.

"The skipper must be insane," said the junior sub, petulantly. "It is monstrous to expect us to mess with greasers. Midshipmen are hogs, but when it comes to engineers——"

Words failed him. He filled his mouth with mutton. Durrant made no effort to combat the opinions of his brother sub. The mess quite understood that he shared Webley's scorn of "greasers."

At this awkward moment the intruders entered the mess, and stood hesitatingly near the door, as though half expecting some show of welcome. The subs took no notice of them; the middies stared and sniggered. Young Haughton was the first to take compassion upon them.

"There's room for you chaps there," he said, indicating the lower end of the table.

The engineers seated themselves in silence. Noakes, the elder of the two, did not appear to notice the coldness of the reception, but Tibbs, an ungainly young man with a timid manner, blushed to the roots of his hair.

A ventilating shaft ran through the table, forming a sort of barrier between the intruders and the other members of the mess.

"The best place for them," whispered Webley to Durrant. "We'll take care to keep them below the salt."

Tibbs saw that the subs were sneering, and drew back behind the ventilator, blushing and confused. He was deeply sensible of his social deficiencies.

Noakes was already quite at ease. He performed some surprising feats with his knife and some potted peas, which interested the middies.

Presently he grew thirsty and said, with his mouth full of food: "Who'll go halves in a bottle of beer?"

"I would," said Haughton wistfully; "but my wine bill's up."

"That doesn't matter," said Noakes; "you're welcome to half my bottle. Civility is cheap at a glass of beer," he added pointedly.

At this Tibbs coloured again, and the two subs looked sheepish.

"We shall have trouble with that bounder, Noakes," said Durrant subsequently; and he was correct in his surmise.

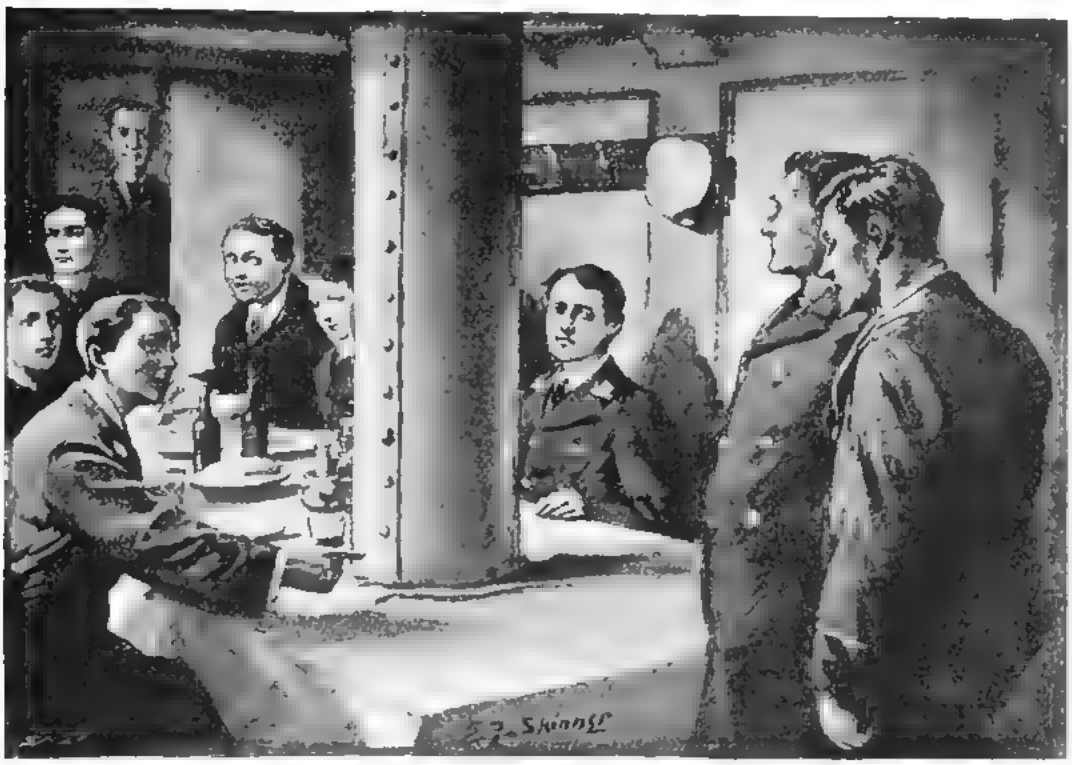
II.

With the exception of young Haughton, who would have dined cheerfully with the cook's mate, the mess continued to resent the advent of Tibbs and Noakes. The captain's experiment did not interest the gun-room officers, for they were indifferent to the social progress of naval engineers. Engineers had always messed by themselves hitherto, and the young executives deplored the progressive ideas of the captain. They had always been taught to regard engineers as members of an inferior race

It was during meals that the intruders suffered most from this executive arrogance. At all other times they avoided the gun-room. The fat clerk, previously the butt of the mess, was the only person that appreciated the captain's experiment. He vacated the position in favour of Tibbs. Noakes, though quite as unpopular as Tibbs, was thick-skinned; he had a sharp tongue, and a talent for rough repartee that enabled him to hold his own. But Tibbs was delightfully sensitive, and quivered visibly at every reference to his social deficiencies.

The subs never addressed any direct observation to either of the engineers; even the steward treated the intruders as disrespectfully as he dared. Tibbs never indulged in any of the "extras" that brought the steward profit, and there was a world of suggestion in the servant's method of reading from the book each morning: "Mr. Tibbs: Nothing."

Webley, who was the rich man of the mess, contrived to show his contempt for the economic habits of poor Tibbs in a way that was considered humorous. It was Webley, too, who found out that the father of Tibbs



"THERE'S ROOM FOR YOU CHAPS THERE!

kept a boot shop, and he at once developed a lively interest in the boot trade. The middies took up the refined joke and wore it to tatters. They consulted Tibbs daily as to the price of leather, and promised to bestow their custom upon "old" Tibbs. "There is nothing like leather," became a stock phrase in the gun-room of the *Porcupine*. Haughton took no share in this rude banter; he threatened to thrash the fat clerk for using the popular phrase.

And Tibbs was grateful. He took the middy aside one day and said: "Mr. Haughton, you're a gentleman; but I don't want you to fall out with your friends on my account. I'm not a gentleman by birth, nor is Mr. Noakes; but, you see, we were ordered to join the gun-room mess, and I've always tried to behave as a gentleman."

Young Haughton was considerably embarrassed. "They'll get tired of it soon," he said. "Try to look as if you didn't mind their remarks."

"I can't help minding them," said Tibbs. "A man has his feelings, Mr. Haughton. I'm not as clever as Mr. Noakes, and I can't shut them up as he does. I don't want to report anyone to the captain," he added miserably; "I only want to be left alone."

"No, you mustn't report them," said Haughton firmly. "You're a good chap, Tibbs. I say," he added, "you shouldn't call us 'mister,' you know. You won't mind my telling you?"

"No," said Tibbs reddening; "and look here, Mr.——I mean—look here, Haughton, if you will come ashore one night before we sail, you can have a dozen pairs of boots from our shop for nothing."

III.

Soon after the *Porcupine* reached her station on the West Coast, a certain Arab chief, who lived on the banks of a pestilential river, in a village surrounded by swamps and human bones, took it into his evil head to defy the local representative of Her Britannic Majesty. The precise form of defiance adopted by the chief is immaterial. It had something to do with non-payment of a fine of so many barrels of palm oil, that had been inflicted by the British Consul for good and sufficient reasons of his own. The Consul said, no doubt correctly, that the chief had been amusing himself by boiling a few slaves and crucifying some of his wives. Clearly a domestic matter, but it was held desirable to make an example of King Bael; and the captain of the *Porcupine*, who wanted to write C.B. after his name, very willingly engaged to reduce the town of Ho-Poo to dust and ashes.

Now Ho-Poo was beyond the range of the cruiser's guns, so that the simple and usual process of dropping shells into it could not be adopted. The town was protected by dense bush, some 10ft. high, and could only be approached by way of a narrow creek, far too shallow for the cruiser. In point of fact, little was known about Ho-Poo; but the Consul and captain were eager to efface it from all future maps of the neighbourhood.

As a preliminary measure, the ship's steam cutter was sent to reconnoitre the pestilential creek, and was despatched upon this mission under charge of a lieutenant. The cutter carried a Nordenfelt in the bows and a dozen seamen, whilst Tibbs was in charge of the engines. The lieutenant was merely ordered to reconnoitre and report upon the precise situation of the town. The attack was to follow next day.

Tibbs seemed to understand the cutter's engines better than anybody else in his department. There was something about those engines that baffled the artificers. They frequently broke down, and would yield to no persuasion except that of Tibbs.

It was still dark when the cutter shoved off and steamed up the pestilential river in search of Ho-Poo Creek. The lieutenant found it at length, and it proved about the width of Regent's Park Canal, and nearly as dirty. In the glimmer of early day the dense jungle extending to the very banks of the creek resembled an interminable forest. The air was stifling. Thin white vapour hung over the water, reeking of fever and ague; but this dissolved under the fierce rays of the morning sun before the cutter had steamed far up the creek. The channel was narrow and tortuous. More than once the boat stuck fast upon the mud banks, but the tide was rising and soon floated her off.

The lieutenant went forward and directed the steering, the coxswain shifting the tiller as directed. Webley and a few seamen were in the stern-sheets, and Tibbs sat amidships controlling the humming engines. No danger was apprehended, but the lieutenant forbade noise and presently reduced the cutter's speed. Now and then, when the engines squeaked or rattled, wild duck rose out of the bush with a burr and sped away in alarm, or a curlew darted from the banks into the shelter of the jungle. Then Tibbs would apply the oil-can and still the squeaking.

The red glow of sunrise stained the sky as the cutter rounded a bend in the creek and glided into a wider stretch of water. Still they could see nothing but jungle, until one of the seamen detected a thin line of blue smoke that

rose in the still air not far away. "Stop engines!" said the lieutenant. "The town should be over there."

Tibbs shut off steam, and took advantage of the pause to tighten a nut or two. The cutter glided on for 50yds. or 60yds., stopped, and lay motionless in the middle of the still lagoon. Suddenly, the silence of dawn was rent by the roar of many guns, as though a tornado had burst upon the boat. Clouds of smoke, streaked with lurid flashes, belched from the bush. A hail of jagged shot swept over the cutter, dealing death and mutilation to the startled crew. The lieutenant reeled and fell; Webley lay gasping in the stern with a gaping wound in his thigh; the stoker fell dead at his post, still grasping his shovel; hardly a man in the boat escaped injury.

It was in this wise that Tibbs, the butt of the gun-room mess, received his baptism of fire, and found himself exalted to the command of an injured boat, and a crew of dead and wounded men. He felt a burning pain in his left arm, and noted, among many other vivid impressions, that the limb had been shot away at the elbow. The pain ceased, and was followed by a sensation of numbness. Blood poured from the severed arteries upon the working parts of the engines, but Tibbs paid no heed to his wound, for all his thoughts were concentrated upon the welfare of the machinery. He realized, almost before the roar of the masked battery died away, that it was his imperative duty to Queen, country, and comrades, not to yield to the deadly faintness which threatened to overpower his faculties. He alone could start the engines; none but he could coax them to perform their work.

The lieutenant tried to raise himself upon one wounded arm, but fell back in a swoon before he could give an order.

No orders came from Webley, who had seemingly fainted, nor did the coxswain appear

"HARD A-PORT," HE SAID FIRMLY, AS HE GRASPED THE STARTING LEVER AND SET THE ENGINES IN MOTION.

to realize that it might still be possible to evade the next discharge of the guns. A bullet sang over the head of Tibbs and another cut away the peak of his cap.

"Hard a-port, coxswain!" he said firmly, as he grasped the starting lever and set the engines in motion.

The confidence of the young engineer seemed to put fresh life into the coxswain, and such others among the mangled crew as could still use their limbs.

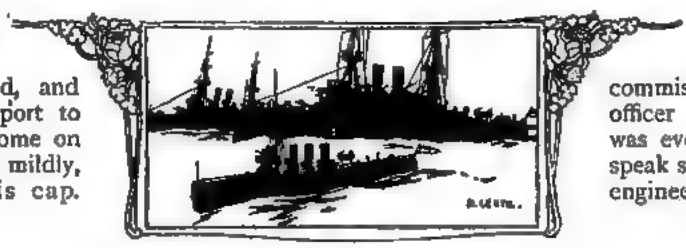
"Hard a-port it is, sir," replied the coxswain. "For the Lord's sake let's get out of this booby-trap!"

They had, indeed, blundered into the very teeth of King Bael's masked battery of ancient artillery, but, thanks to the courage and coolness of young Tibbs, the cutter drew out of range before the unskilled natives could re-load the guns.

"It was a fair treat," said the coxswain in after days, "to see Mr. Tibbs working them rotten engines, with the blood dripping from the stump of his arm, and his face as grey as ashes. If it hadn't been for his pluck, the next broadside must have settled the job."

The cutter had started before daylight, but noon had passed ere she crept back to the mouth of the river, where the *Porcupine* lay at anchor. More than once the young engineer had fainted from loss of blood; and the machinery would not work without his coaxing. The coxswain contrived to stop the bleeding, but the fires nearly went out, and the steam pressure declined to zero before Tibbs revived sufficiently to tell the sailors how to act. But they reached the ship at last, and the crew of the *Porcupine* gave Tibbs a lusty cheer as he tottered up the companion ladder.

Tibbs blushed, and walked aft to report to the captain. "Come on board, sir," he said mildly, as he raised his cap. Then he fainted again, and would have fallen if the captain had not caught him, and carried him below amid the renewed cheers of the excited crew.



The gallant conduct of Tibbs was very warmly commended in the dispatch that notified the wiping out of Ho-Poo. The despatch was published in the *Gazette*, and, as it chanced to be a slack season, some of the London papers eulogized the courage of the young engineer. He was famous for a week as the hero of Ho-Poo Creek. Tibbs senior still treasures a portrait of his son that appeared in one of the illustrated journals.

He knew that it was his son's likeness, for it was so stated in the accompanying report.

And the Admiralty, who do now and then recognize valour and coolness in non combatant officers, promoted Tibbs to be engineer and conferred upon him the Distinguished Service Order. With their usual liberality, they also gave him an extra shilling a day in place of his left arm.

So Tibbs became temporarily famous and bore his honours and pension for wounds with due modesty. But I have heard that he thought more of the farewell dinner given in his honour by the officers of the *Porcupine* than he did of his "D.S.O."

It is certain that his photograph occupied a prominent position in the gun-room mess during the rest of the commission; and that no officer of the *Porcupine* was ever again heard to speak slightingly of naval engineers.

"THE CAPTAIN" CLUB.

The Editor will be glad to receive names and addresses of those readers who wish to join the "Captain" Club. Only *bonâ fide* purchasers of THE CAPTAIN are eligible for election. There is no entrance fee and no subscription. Simply declare that you are a regular purchaser of the Magazine. Further particulars relating to the CLUB will be published in due course, together with a list of officers (President, Vice-Presidents, &c.).

KINGLAND is an island in the Atlantic, which is avoided by mariners on account of the perilous currents abounding in its vicinity. In fact, only one ship calls there *per annum*. The inhabitants rely for food and clothing, etc., entirely on the contents of derelicts which drift on to their shores. In Kingland, the King only reigns one year, and every man has his turn. King Waterbottle is a waiter who takes very unwillingly to the throne; so, as his twin brother is expected home from England by the annual ship, the Chancellor and Commander-in-Chief propose to dethrone Waterbottle and put his brother in his place. Waterbottle at first agrees to this proposition, but later repents him of his offer to abdicate, chiefly because his *fiancée*, a waitress named Buzzie, has a great desire to be Queen of Kingland. Enraged by Waterbottle's change of mind, the Chancellor and Commander-in-Chief are sitting up late one night, plotting the monarch's destruction, when the one ship that calls at Kingland is driven ashore a complete wreck, and Waterbottle's twin brother is flung on to the beach. The Chancellor and his fellow-conspirator find him there, convey him to the Chancellor's house, and put him to bed, keeping the fact of their discovery a dead secret.

CHAPER V.

THE MESSAGE IN THE BOTTLE.

IN the morning most of the population of the island were assembled on the beach to get what they could out of the wreck. Even the old women and babies were there. Kingland had an unwritten code of honour—what you found you kept; you hung on to it like grim death; it adorned your home for ever afterwards unless you bartered it for something else—which you generally did.

Babies—even babies who could only crawl—sometimes made themselves independent for life by picking a pearl necklace out of a bunch of seaweed; gurgling nursery-talk to the tiny crabs in a little pool one day, an infant fished out a diamond ring of huge value. The infant never wanted for anything afterwards, for the captain of the yearly ship, being shown the ring, said that it was worth fifty barrels of salt pork, and proceeded to hand over salt pork to that amount. The baby and its family bartered that salt pork with the other islanders for many, many years afterwards.

Therefore babies were allowed on the beach. There was no knowing what they wouldn't find whilst innocently gambolling in the sunshine.

On this particular occasion, the wrecked ship being the yearly ship, it was found to contain a number of articles of small value which the skipper of the vessel was wont to exchange with the simple-minded islanders for the trinkets they found on the shore. Beads, pocket-knives, penny editions of famous books, boxes of butterscotch, tins of meat extract, toys of the kind that London gutter-merchants sell, and a variety of other things worth anything up to sixpence—but certainly not more—came floating ashore when the schooner broke up.

The islanders were disappointed. However, there were always the babies; had the babies found anything? No, but wait! One baby *had* found something, *i.e.*, a bottle, corked. Anything inside it? Yes, a piece of paper.

They crowded round while an old, white-bearded islander drew the cork and unfolded the document the bottle contained. The document was addressed—

TO JACK WATERBOTTLE,
KINGLAND,
ATLANTIC OCEAN.

"This is for the King," said the old man. "Go, somebody, and fetch his Majesty," he added.

At that moment up strode the Chancellor, followed by the Commander-in-Chief and the Army.

"Long live the good Lord Chancellor!" feebly cried the poor islanders, who knew that the Chancellor expected this salutation.

"Thank you, people, thank you," the Chancellor was gracious enough to reply; "er—very nice of you, I am sure. But it seems you have been busy before we arrived. Of course, every islander is entitled to keep what he finds; but he mustn't find anything before the Lord Chancellor has had his little search round. Is that not so, my dear Commander-in-Chief?" he concluded, turning to the famous warrior by his side. The Commander-in-Chief bowed gravely.

"So," continued the Chancellor, suddenly grabbing the white-bearded islander by his white beard, "what have *you* found, you villain?"

"Only a bit of oil-cloth and a few nails," whimpered the veteran.

"I don't believe you," snarled the Chancellor. "Here," he added, beckoning to the soldiers, "search the old scamp!"

As the Army proceeded to do his bidding the Chancellor turned to a pale young woman, who was holding a baby.

"And what have *you* found, madame?" he asked her roughly.

"Only a few biscuits, so please your lordship," she replied with a meek curtsey.

"More lies!" said the Chancellor. "Army, do your duty."

But at this juncture the bold cabman, of whom I have spoken several times, elbowed his way through the crowd.

"Wait a minute, Mister," he said. "That there's my sister. 'Er 'usband's ill, and she's lookin' for both. I don't advise any of your Army to lay a finger on 'er."

"Who are you, fellow?" demanded the Chancellor.

"I drives a keb," said the cabman, "and the larst time I drove you, you didn't pay me, and I'm blest if I won't tell the King next Grievance Day."

Every month, it should be explained, the King had a "grievance day," when anybody might complain to him if they had been cheated or ill-treated by their neighbours. Hitherto, every monarch had stood so much in awe of the Chancellor that he never dared take any notice of the complaints the people brought him about that minister's extortions and cruelties.

"Pooh!" cried the Chancellor, "you ought to know better than to do that."

"Waterbottle's got a backbone," retorted the cabman; "'e means to 'ave 'is way. 'E don't care a 'ang about you, 'e don't, and no more don't——"

But at that moment the tallest soldier in the Army, who had crept up unseen, smote the cabman a violent blow with the butt of his spear, just behind the knees. The cabman uttered a cry and fell backwards, whereupon the Army pinioned him.

"Take him away and lock him up," said the Chancellor to two of the soldiers, "and see that he has nothing but bad potatoes to eat for a week. Give him twenty stripes on the bare back every evening, and then rub salt into the wounds inflicted by the lash. That," concluded the Chancellor, scowling round on the trembling crowd, "is how I treat rogues who defy me."

The cabman having been led away to prison, the Chancellor proceeded to examine what everybody had found, annexing all that he took a fancy to. He was still employed thus, when a slight, unhealthy-looking youth, wishing to curry favour with the great man, informed the Chancellor of the discovery of the bottle with the message in it.

"Eh? What's that? A *bottle?*"

"Containing a letter addressed to the King, my Lord Chancellor."

"Let me see it at once!"

The bottle was brought to him, and he deliberately opened the letter. It seemed to one or two of the bystanders that he smiled as he did so.

"Listen all," he said, "for this missive is of national importance. Before reading it to you I must tell you something of which you have never yet been informed. King Waterbottle had a twin brother, who was being educated in a country called England—at two seats of learning called (according to the King, who gave me this information) Heton and Hoxford. This brother, who should have ascended the throne before the reigning king—on account of his superior education—was in that ship, the remains of which are now scattered about this shore. When the ship was driving on to the rocks last night the brother of your King wrote this letter and put it into this bottle. The letter runs thus:—

Dear Jack,—Ship doomed.

Love to all,

Augustus.

"That," continued the Chancellor, with a break in his voice, "is all. Augustus Waterbottle is drowned. His body may be washed

ashore—we shall see. If it is, we will give it fitting burial. Take the message to your King," he concluded, unable to control his emotion, "and give it to him, with my sincere sympathy. Ah! poor young man—cut off in the prime of life—poor young man!"

And the Lord Chancellor burst into tears.

The people, ever deeming it expedient to humour this high official, burst into tears as well—first the women, then the men, then the babies, then the four remaining members of the Army. Nobody really cared a button about the deceased twin-Waterbottle, but everybody wept loudly. Tears streamed down the cheeks of the most hardened ruffians in the island—

THE PEOPLE . . . BURST INTO TEARS.

such was the universal wish to "keep in" with the tyrannical Lord Chancellor.

"Thank you! thank you!" sobbed the Lord Chancellor; "such sympathy touches my heart. My beloved countrymen, how can I requite you for your kindness? Ah! wait! there is still much wreckage on the beach—you may have it all! Not a word," he added, as some of the islanders, apparently overcome by his kindness, threw themselves at his feet and kissed his shoe buckles, "not a word. You deserve it all!"

As a matter of fact, he had relieved them of everything worth having, but the people cried more violently than ever, so touched were they by the Chancellor's unselfishness.

"Hullo!" exclaimed a voice. "Why so much eye-piping? 'Morning, Chancellor! Been picking up a few oddments, I see!"

It was the King, who, with Buzzie leaning on his arm, was taking a constitutional before his mid-day dinner.

"Good morning, your Majesty," replied the Chancellor, obsequiously. "Yes, it is true I have been collecting a few articles to present to your Majesty. Shall I have them conveyed to the palace?"

The King glanced suspiciously at his principal minister. This liberality on the Lord Chancellor's part was quite unusual. Waterbottle felt uncertain as to how he ought to reply, but Buzzie whispered, "Take them!" and the King accepted the offerings.

"I have a piece of very sad intelligence to communicate to your Majesty," continued the Lord Chancellor, "but pray read for yourself."

And he handed the King the message that had come ashore in the bottle.

"Why have you presumed to open this here letter?" demanded Waterbottle.

"*I* presume! Your Majesty is over-hasty. I found a vile cab-driver fellow derisively imparting its contents to the vulgar herd here, and I packed him off to gaol pretty quickly. You commend me for my zeal, I hope?"

"I don't a bit. Why didn't you send 'im up to me to be talked to?"

"I hardly thought the case important enough to place before you. You see, next Grievance Day is three weeks off, and that seemed a long time to let the scoundrel walk about without punishment."

"Hum!" said the King. "You've got wonderful respectful all at once, Chancellor. Now let's have a look at this."

He opened the piece of paper and read the message.

"*What!* Gus! *Gus* in that ship! He says here: 'Ship doomed.' He was expectin' to be drowned, then. Poor old Gus! This upsets me. Has his body been washed ashore?"

A number of people in the crowd assured the King that no bodies whatever had been cast up by the waves.

"Well," said the King, folding up the piece of paper and putting it in his pocket, "I won't believe my brother's dead until his corpse lies before my eyes. Ever since he was able to crawl he has been a wonderful chap at getting out of fixes, and you may depend on it that he's floating round somewhere on a raft, or clinging to a hen-coop. If a cat has got nine lives, Gus has got ninety."

"Your Majesty is in a sanguine mood," sneered the Lord Chancellor.

"Never mind what sort of a mood I'm in," returned the King. "I'm not anxious to talk to you. I came out for a walk. My dear!"

The King offered his arm to Buzzie, who blushingly accepted it, and the young couple walked away up the beach.

The Chancellor watched the King and his sweetheart until they were out of sight, and then, turning to the Commander-in-Chief, deliberately winked.

"That idea of yours about the bottle," he observed, as they walked towards the town together, "was a very good one, my dear Commander-in-Chief. Our plan has worked well. You evidently placed it where it couldn't very well be missed. You're a genius, my boy."

The Commander-in-Chief blushed like a girl, so pleased was he at the result of his simple stratagem and the Chancellor's compliment.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CHANGELING.

"Buzzie," said Waterbottle, when they were round a projecting point of the cliffs, and hidden from the islanders, "I wish we was well out of all this."

"So do I, dear," said Buzzie.

"Away," continued Waterbottle, savagely, "from lord chancellors and armies — somewhere quiet, you know."

"A place like London, for instance," chimed in Buzzie, "you know—that little round dot on Great Britain—though why they call it Great Britain beats me, for it seems a tiny place, according to its size on the map."

Buzzie had only studied the map of the world, and, of course, London was only a speck on that. She imagined that Kingland was one of the biggest places in the world, and thought it wasn't marked on the map because there wasn't room for it.

"London, let me tell you," said her lover, in a proud, informative, been-to-night-school-for-a-year-come-Christmas sort of way, "is not a quiet place, my darling. I have read in a book about a tower it has, and a very dreadful, savage place it seems to be. They chop off the heads of queens there as soon as look at 'em. There was one called Lady Jane——"

"If she was queen why wasn't she *called* 'queen'?" demanded Buzzie.

"She was only Lady Jane, but her husband said she was the rightful queen and put her on the throne. Then the real queen came along and had Lady Jane's head chopped off—crool, I call it."

"But it was her husband whose head had ought to have been chopped off," objected Buzzie.

"That's all right — it *was!*" Waterbottle assured her.

"And serve him well right!" declared Buzzie, with a snap of her pretty white teeth.

"Anyhow," said Waterbottle, "it's a murderous sort of place, and not at all quiet. No; the place for us is what they call a village—where you grow cows and vegetables, and have a little Parliament called a vestry meeting, where you all shout together and make a jolly good row. Call each other names, too—something 'orrid. I've read of it all."

"But that's not being very quiet," said Buzzie.

"Oh, it only 'appens now an' agen," said Waterbottle, "just to liven you hup. But villages are real, nice places. From what I can make out you do a bit o' work—say weedin'—and for that you are paid coins, and with those coins you buy bread and meat, and clothes, and everything you want. I expect they pay you so much a weed, if the weeds are anything like as big as they are in Kingland. Well, while I was weedin' you might be buying things, and so we should jog along, quiet and easy, and never have no chancellors to worrit us. Do you like the prospick, my darling?"

"It's lovely," breathed Buzzie, "but how—how can we get to England?"

"Well," said Waterbottle, "it's certain we can't swim there, but I've thought of another way."

"You *are* so clever," sighed Buzzie, "I wonder you can put up with a stupid girl like me."

"Never mind that, dear—you're *good*, and that's better than being clever."

"Oh," cried Buzzie, with a toss of her head, "and so you think I *am* stupid, do you?"

"Well, my darling," replied the King, "didn't you say you was yourself?"

"Oh, you old silly! Don't you understand I called myself stupid in order to make you say I was clever? You don't understand girls a bit,

"THE KING OF KINGLAND BEGS TO SAY —"

Mister Waterbottle — I mean," with a mock curtsey, "your *Majesty!*"

"Seems to me that we may as well drop all that 'ank when there's nobody by," observed Waterbottle, "although, of course, it's useful bein' a King sometimes. I'll show you now how it can be made very useful. Got a pencil?"

Yes, Buzzie had a pencil and a piece of paper. She produced them.

"Come and sit down 'ere," said Waterbottle, indicating a big flat rock. "Now then, I'm goin' to write a letter and send it out to sea in the very bottle that poor Augustus wrote to me in. Somebody may pick it up and—well, here goes!"

So he wrote on the paper, in a large, round, distinct hand:—

The King of Kingland begs to say that he will be quite willing to make over his kingdom to anybody who will fetch him and his wife and take them to England.

(*Signed*) *Waterbottle, R.*

Kingland, Atlantic Ocean.

"You've put 'Waterbottler,' instead of 'Waterbottle,'" corrected Buzzie.

"That's all right, my love. In all the royal proclamations in the books I've read there's always an 'R' after the monarch's name. I don't know why, but there it is. Now then, see—I put this in the bottle, and I cork it up, and I fling it out to sea, and the tide will whip it away into the track of ships, and for all we know we may get up one morning and find an English gentleman-of-war waiting to take us to England."

Again the Lord Chancellor and Commander-in-Chief sat in the former's house at dead of night, toasting each other copiously in gin-and-water.

"The time has come!" said the Chancellor.

"It has!" agreed the military man.

"Waterbottle must go!"

"He must!"

"But how?"

"Ah—how?"

"Instead," ejaculated the Chancellor, crossly, "of simply echoing my words in that absurd way, why don't you propose something? It seems to me that I have to do all the thinking, while you simply stand by gaping and agreeing that everything I do is very clever."

"I am a man of deeds, not words," returned the Commander-in-Chief, sourly.

"Very well, then, I'll soon give you something to do. Come!"

He arose and walked into the kitchen, the Commander-in-Chief following him. The Chancellor removed a mat and pointed to a huge iron ring let into a slab of stone.

"Lay hold of that!"

The other laid hold.

"Pull!"

The other pulled and tugged and strained

with all his might, but uselessly. He could not move the slab.

"Got a crowbar?" he gasped.

"Yes, here is a crowbar. Have another try."

The Commander-in-Chief was a tall, wiry man, and had plenty of strength. He wrenched at the ring until the veins swelled out upon his forehead in a manner horrible to behold. He stopped and took breath, and once more went to work with the crowbar, and strained at the ring until his face was purple and the perspiration was pouring down his cheeks. He snatched off his helmet, and went at the ring again with clenched teeth and set jaw. His exertions fairly shook the room. At length, with a groan, he dropped the crowbar and staggered to the nearest chair, collapsing into it like a man in a swoon.

The Chancellor watched him with a sarcastic smile playing round the corners of his mouth.

"I can't move it!" cried the Commander-in-Chief, hoarsely; "it is beyond any one man's strength!"

"By no means," returned the Chancellor, "a child could do it!"

"Prove your words, you sneering cad!" yelled the Commander-in-Chief, glaring at his tormentor, "prove your words—or—or——"

"Pray be calm—*see!*"

The Chancellor picked up the crowbar delicately, and put the end under the ring. Immediately the huge slab of stone sprang upwards, disclosing a staircase.

"You know the trick of it," said the other, hoarsely.

"Precisely; and I alone. If I chose to drop you down that staircase no living man would ever be the wiser. Your loudest shriek would never be heard. At the foot of this staircase is the dungeon in which I kept Waterbottle for six months. It is my intention to put him back there. And he will never come up again."

"You won't—murder him?" gasped the Commander-in-Chief, with white lips.

"Certainly not! I never murder people. I shall keep him alive—but only just alive. I will pay him out for all his insolence."

"And then you will declare his brother to be King?" inquired the other.

"Oh dear, no! Meek as they are, I don't think they would stand the present Waterbottle being put away. He is too popular. No, it must be done very quietly. They must be exchanged!"

"Exchanged!"

"How you do echo me! E-X-C-H-A-N-G-E-D, 'exchanged.' That's what I said. But a third person must be let into the plot. It is necessary. While we exchange the brothers somebody must call off the attention of Hag Haggety. She's a watchful old cat, and she's fond of Waterbottle. Now, do you know anybody who hates the King—hates him like poison?"

"Yes—Sergeant So-so—the tallest man in the Army."

"Of course. Waterbottle blacked both his eyes. Good. Will you go and fetch Sergeant So-so?"

"Certainly."

When the tall soldier arrived, the Chancellor put a few questions to him which speedily elicited the fact that he would go through fire and water to do the King a lasting injury. The crafty Chancellor soon learned that there was something more than a couple of black eyes in the matter. The sergeant had taken a violent fancy to the King's young woman, the fair Buzzie.

"Good," chuckled the Chancellor to himself, "he will be faithful and silent. Love and Revenge—two of the most powerful passions by which man is swayed. Excellent. If he ever gets rebellious I will pop him into the dungeon, too."

Then he said aloud:—

"Very well, *Lieutenant* So-so"—the tall soldier reddened with pleasure; this was rapid promotion, indeed—"very well—we understand each other, then. You obey my bidding, and keep silent, and you shall have both wishes gratified. You shall be revenged on Waterbottle and you shall marry his young woman. Give me your hand on it!"

Lieutenant So-so did so.

"He is mine," muttered the Chancellor. "Now to work."

The Chancellor led the other two back to the sitting-room, where he touched a spring in the wall, and lo! part of the wall flew out and disclosed a little apartment, about 6ft. square in size. On a mattress, covered with blankets, lay Augustus Waterbottle, sleeping heavily.

"I've given him a little something," explained the Chancellor, "that will keep him in this state until breakfast-time. I have something else here," producing a tiny white bottle, "which I will use on a handkerchief very shortly for the King's benefit. *His benefit*—ha! ha! Yes, that medicine-chest that came ashore has been very useful. I have often dabbled with its contents. My wife and daughter were poking and prying about to-day—they seemed to think somebody else was in the house besides ourselves—and so I doctored their tea this evening, and they won't pry about any more for at least forty-eight hours. You wouldn't think that an innocent-looking gentleman like me would think of such expedients, *would* you, *Captain* So-so?"

"No, my lord, I should not!" replied the tall soldier, blushing again on his second promotion.

"But we must be stirring. Listen! *Major* So-so, you will arouse Hag Haggety and tell her that one of your fellow-soldiers is ill. She is famous for her herb treatments, and will always attend a sick person if she is paid well. To afford a good excuse for arousing her, just tip this powder down your fellow-soldier's throat before you take her in to see him."

And the Chancellor took a small blue paper packet out of his medicine chest.

"Is it—dangerous?" asked the tall soldier, nervously.

IMMEDIATELY THE HUGE SLAB OF STONE SPRANG UPWARDS, DISCLOSING A STAIRCASE.

"Not very. It will only make him foam at the mouth. Keep Hag there all night. We will do the rest. See she doesn't leave the barracks on any pretence whatever—not even to fetch her beastly herbs."

"Very good, my lord."

"Go, then."

Ten minutes later, peering out of the window, the Chancellor saw the tall soldier and Hag Haggety hasten by in the direction of the barracks.

"Now, Commander-in-Chief!"

They seized the sleeping Augustus Waterbottle by head and feet, sped down the street with him, and entered the palace.

"Not a moment to be lost!" whispered the Chancellor, emptying the contents of the bottle on to a handkerchief. He took off his shoes and crept as silently as a cat into Waterbottle's bedroom.

There was a slight cry—a gasp of horror—the sounds of a short struggle, and then—silence!

The Chancellor came running back into the ante-chamber.

"It's all right, Waterbottle's insensible. Come along—steady—*there!*"

They removed Augustus Waterbottle's clothes and placed him in the King's bed. When he awoke he would find merely the King's every day attire awaiting him.

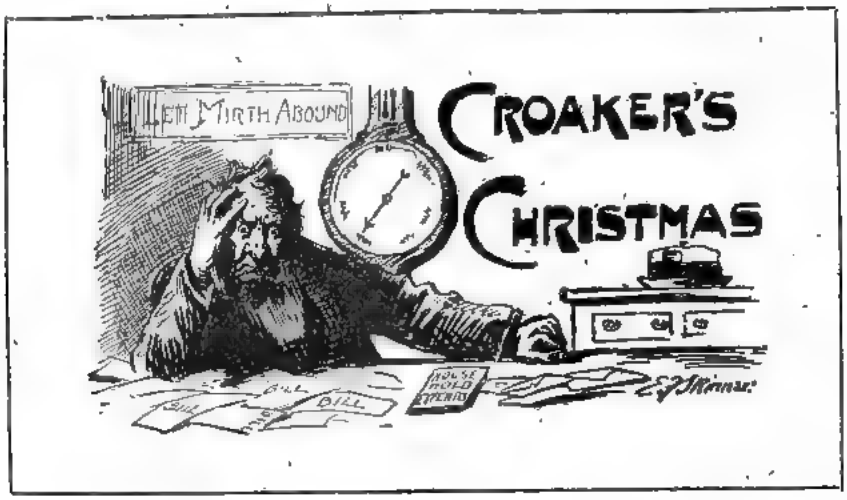
Then they slipped Augustus' clothes on to the King, and dragged the King's inanimate form out of the bed-room, closing the door softly behind them.

Then, bearing the King by head and heels, out into the street they went, swiftly, silently, to the Chancellor's house, and into the kitchen.

Swiftly, silently, the King was lowered into the dungeon, and pitched on to the straw there.

The deed was done!

(To be Continued.)



BAH! I can't see what sense there is
In styling Christmas "Merry"!
It never brought me anything,
But double work and worry;
From morn to night for one whole month
It's naught but push and hurry.

From all the months of all the year,
December still will borrow,
The good old rule, "Don't do-to-day
What can be done to-morrow,"
Crowds two months' labours into one—
I know it to my sorrow!

SUCH "SEASONABLE WEATHER!"

December! what a likely month
To talk of being jolly!
When everyone seems crazed for "green,
There's nothing green but holly—
Except the dupes who strive with mirth,
To drown their melancholy.

Then there's the frost, and snow, and fog—
Such "seasonable weather!"
And storms of rain, and wind, and slates
All mingled up together;
If one can bear it all and live,
One must be tough as leather.

Yes; what with these, and much besides,
Which I'll not fail to mention,
Where in the world the fun comes in
Is past my comprehension!
A pleasant relaxation?—No!
A little tighter tension.

EXPECTS—AND GETS (?)—A CHRISTMAS BOX.

Why, every lout I ever met,
In office, street, or station,
Expects—and gets (?)—a Christmas box—
"A slight consideration."
As though I had a diamond mine,
Or pension from the nation!

And then at home it's just as bad,
A huge rise in expenses;
I *must* buy this, subscribe to that—
Such pretexts and pretences!
While butchers', bakers', grocers' bills
'Most drive me from my senses.

There's nothing in the house to eat
(They call this jubilation)
But puddings, tarts, mince-pies, and cakes—
A wonderful creation!
There's no escape—it must go down,
It's nightmare or starvation!

So I shall hold, whate'er they say,
This season much o'er-rated;
In fact, to me the whole thing is
A bore unmitigated.
Thank heaven it comes but once a year,
And very much belated!

ALF. B. COOPER.

IT'S NIGHTMARE OR STARVATION.

Simple Theatricals for Christmas Evenings

By C. P. Jones.

The charm of simple theatricals is that those engaging in them can do and make everything for themselves—including the play. In almost every youthful circle there is someone suffering from literary ambitions. Let him take a dramatic episode from the many English history presents, and round it weave a simple story, keeping the while an eye on the capacities of his friends the actors. These actors will have the advantage of being more or less familiar with the characters they impersonate. And, if the period in history be well chosen, some very pretty effects can be got by the costumes — how, I shall presently show.

But first, lest there may be any who are scared by what may appear a counsel of perfection, let me say that Messrs. French, of the Strand, have plays enough, both for old and young, to admit of a careful selection being made. You have only to write them, enclosing a stamped envelope, to get particulars.

The play, and its author, decided on, next comes a momentous matter. The "team" must pick a "captain"—elect someone whose orders they will unhesitatingly obey, and whose decision—like the editor's—must be final. He must act as stage manager and acting manager, must settle all differences, and generally supervise everybody. It will be his first duty to "caste" the piece—that is, to allot the different parts to the various actors. That done, everyone can get to work.

A KNIGHT OF THE MIDDLE AGES IN CHAIN-MAIL ARMOUR, MADE OF DUSTERS AND SILVER PAINT.

Outside the work of rehearsing the piece, the costumes will be found to best repay labour. Upon the stage no great scenic effects should be attempted—rather let simplicity be here the aim. But the costumes can more than compensate for lack of colour on the stage itself. A small expenditure will get material for really beautiful and striking dresses—that is, if a little good taste and some hard work be also brought to bear on it. There are boundless opportunities for delighting the eyes of the audience. That those opportunities should not be missed I append a few hints. Their application will demand skill, effort, and patience.

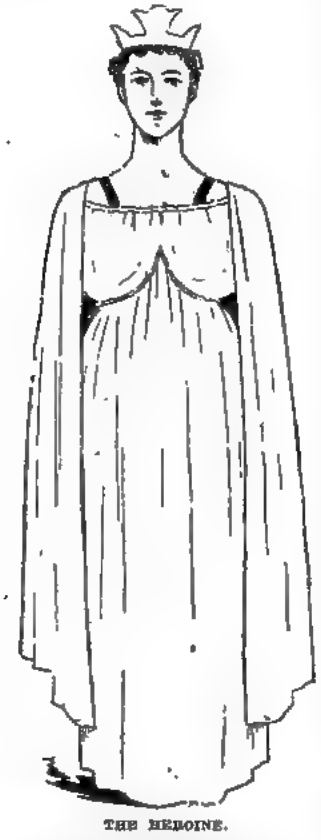
In nine cases out of ten, the Middle Ages have an irresistible attraction for young playwrights. This is fortunate. Mediæval times and manners seem to lend themselves to youthful histrionic effort. Assuming, then, that the play is pitched in

> Days of old, when knights were bold,
> And barons held their sway—

—as in all probability it will be—assuming also that it includes, if not actual fighting, at least men-at-arms—as in all certitude it will—armour, and plenty of it, becomes an absolute necessity. This is how stage armour can best be made.

Get a large piece of cardboard (for 1d. the draper will sell quite a quantity) and on it smoothly paste some silvered paper, taking care that the paper lies quite flat upon the card. When it has thoroughly dried, the work of cutting-out commences, and will keep several hands busy for some hours.

The cardboard must be cut into small, triangular shield shapes, about 1in. in length. The more of these are cut out the better. Through the top of each a hole must be pierced, and through this some stout thread inserted; they can be strung together thus in rows. To attach these rows to a jacket—or, better still, a jersey—by means of needle and cotton, is easy. But care must be taken that the rows thickly overlap, or the jersey will peep through from underneath. If this danger be avoided, the illusion of scale armour is perfect.



THE HEROINE.
Costume of white flannelette and crimson plush. The crown is of gold paper and cardboard.

Then, for the helmet. Here, again, cardboard and silvered paper will suffice. The cardboard can easily be made to take the shape required. Shields can be made of the same material, and if anyone has a talent for painting, and is endowed with superfluous energy he can blazon any device he pleases on them. The device should be executed on paper, then cut neatly out, and pasted on the shield. Swords, again, can be made of wood; the blade to be covered with silvered, and the hilt with gold paper. Both these invaluable disguises are procurable from the toy shop. Two shillings will purchase a quantity.

The making of chain armour requires more artistic nicety, though the artist may not have any more delicate material for his work than the coarsest of coarse dusters—the coarser, in fact, the better for his purpose. On these dusters long, thick streaks of silver paint (to be had also at the toy shop) should be laid on at right angles to each other, so that they form regular squares. If this be done carefully the counterfeit presentment of chain armour is exact, and that armour lightly drawn over the ears, down across the forehead of the actor, covering all except his face, has a striking effect.

Armour does not exhaust the costumes. It is, in fact, with the non-militant apparel that the best effects are to be got. Much must depend on the skill and care of those producing the play; but their skill will avail them more if they be warned in time of sundry pitfalls. First, then, the costumes should be simple; nothing intricate had better be attempted. As a rule, two colours in one costume—each to set off the other—are enough. Care should be taken that no two costumes resemble each other too closely or are in too sharp contrast.

Speaking generally, the more vivid colours had better be avoided. The darker are best. White flannelette at 2s. 3d. a yard, with a dark green or dark red plush stripe upon it looks astonishingly effective, and would make a capital robe for the heroine. On the stage, of course, velveteen is as good as velvet, just as satine is as good as satin. Again, unbleached calico, with little red shreds of black cloth upon it will make an admirably good imitation of ermine, scarcely to be detected from the genuine article.

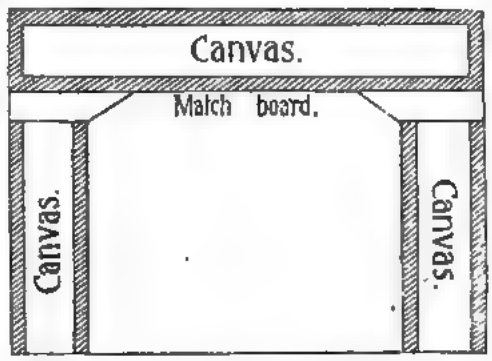
A WARRIOR BOLD.
The scale armour can be made of cardboard and silvered paper, with tunic and sash of red plush.

Probably the reader will get a better idea by studying the accompanying sketches and their materials. They are not in any sense imaginary, but in all cases were drawn from life.

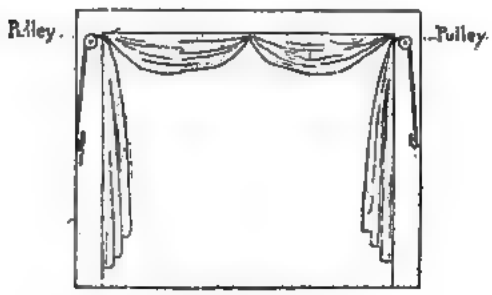
While I am on the subject of appearances I had better deal with the question of make-up. The less of this there is the better. But some is absolutely necessary, or the deadly pallor of the actors will strike chill to their friends in front. Professionals, when making-up, first cover the face with grease paint. Youthful amateurs had better use rice powder, which they can buy in small quantities from any chemist. This should

be rubbed well in right up to the eyes. Beetroot juice, or geranium leaves, on the tips of one's fingers will touch up the cheeks, and a burnt match skilfully applied is best for eyebrows. Moustachios are to be obtained from the local toy shop. Remember that in "making-up" lines skilfully drawn on an actor's face can lengthen or shorten his nose and lip. There had better be one maker-up to the troupe.

Wigs it will be best to hire for the occasion. Mr. Fox, of Russell Street, Covent Garden, W.C., lets them out for 2s. 6d. (gentleman's), and 3s. 6d. (lady's); and, should you require any properties, you can get most of them from his establishment on hire for 1s. A small deposit is necessary. But neither wigs nor properties are essential.



FRAME FOR THE STAGE, WHERE NO FOLDING DOORS ARE AVAILABLE.



BACK VIEW OF THE CURTAIN UP.

We come now to the stage: and about the stage there is one thing of primal importance, on which the whole success of the piece may depend. The stage must be well lighted. Other considerations matter little in comparison with this. It is vital; but it can be secured very simply.

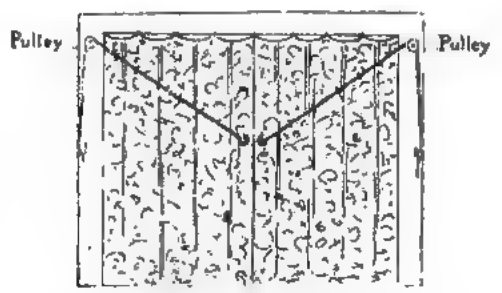
There are many patent substitutes for footlights. My advice is to discard them all. They are nearly all unsatisfactory, and some are positively dangerous, and there is a simple expedient that beats them all—every one.

In front of the stage place a board, backed by red felt, and nail securely to it, on the side further from the audience, half a dozen common or garden tin lamps, with brightly-polished reflectors. These can be purchased from the oil shop for 1s. Provided you see that the wicks are trimmed, and the lamps in good repair, they will give excellent light. But they must not be seen by the audience (hence the board). The reflectors are essential.

So much for the footlights. Next comes a more difficult matter—the scenery. It is difficult, because, as a rule, youthful play producers want to achieve too much in this direction. If they take my advice they will make up their minds that they cannot attempt too little. Let there be one simple background for the piece right the way through, and let the accessories only be changed. If this piece of scenery be well painted it will sufficiently partake of the nature of a triumph. Indeed it is quite possible to play very well without any scenery at all, and unless one of the company possesses unusual skill in the direction of painting, I recommend that this be done.

But if there be a painter in the troupe, let him get a good stiff piece of canvas large enough to stretch right across the stage, some chalk, a stiff brush that he can handle easily, and colours. He can obtain all these things from the local oilman at a cost of about 7s. Let the painter first chalk his canvas over, and then apply his colours boldly, remembering that it is its appearance 20ft. off, and not close at hand, that matters.

For the rest, there should be as few things on the stage as possible. If the play be pitched in ancient times these must be robbed of all appearance of modernity. The author, of course, must be made to cut his coat according to his cloth, and his play need be none the worse in that its interest does not depend on trap-doors etc.



BACK VIEW OF THE CURTAIN DOWN.

I have delayed dealing with the making of the stage; and for a reason. My own view is, that the labour it requires is out of proportion to

the result, and that the young amateur had better content himself with ordinary floor-boards. But if determined on a stage, there is only one thing to remember in making it. The back should be slightly higher than the front. I cannot give the angle at which it should slant; this must depend on the extent of the audience; but the incline had better be too gradual than too steep. That incline is easily secured. You can attempt to achieve it by nailing planks down to wooden supports. This method has the disadvantage of damaging the floors, and is peculiarly calculated to rouse parents and guardians. A simpler way is to arrange the planks forming the stage on substantial boxes or lockers, taking care, of course, that those in front are smaller than those at the back. But whether one has a stage or not is really of little importance of the curtain raisers standing on the stage, protected from the gaze of the audience. It also allows of a prompter being close at hand, and it has other advantages. But when this is impossible, let those of the troupe who have a talent for carpentry make a frame of canvas and wood, resembling in shape the front of a wall whose folding doors have been removed, and large enough, if possible, to fit the room. The front of the canvas should be covered with paper, and securely nailed on.

TOO MUCH—

Quite otherwise is the case with the curtain. A curtain that won't go up, or come down, is enough to spoil the success of a play. It irritates the audience, embarrasses the actors, and makes the whole thing hang fire. The curtain, therefore, is of real importance, and the best way to make it is as follows.

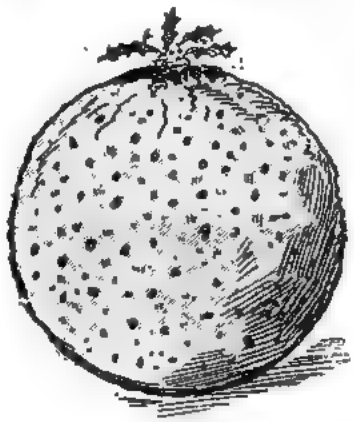
From end to end of the front of the stage, close up to the ceiling, a foot or so back from the lamps, stretch a cord from nails, and on it put rings. From these rings support, not one, but two curtains. In the middle of each of these there should be another ring, and through that ring another piece of twine, running through a pulley at each top corner of the curtain. Anyone pulling the other end of the twine causes the curtains to instantly fly up and curve gracefully at the top and sides of the stage. Then the ropes can be secured to something in the wall, as with a blind cord. Curtain practice, by the way, is advisable, so that the two entrusted with this important duty may act unfailingly on the instant.

And the curtain brings me to my last point. It is much better, wherever possible, to play in a room with folding doors; the doors, of course, being taken out. This admits, among other things,

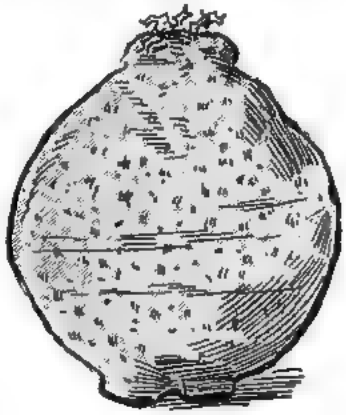
AN EVOLUTIONARY WARNING.

By Felix Leigh.

DON'T EAT—



PUDDING!!!



CHRISTMAS—

THE OLDEST SCHOOL IN ENGLAND.

THE Grammar School of St. Albans is not only the oldest, but also one of the most interesting of our public schools. It was founded by the monastery about the year 1095—sixty-seven years before the Derby Free School (1162), and over 100 years before the School of St. Edmundbury (1198). The school soon became famous, and in 1195 had more scholars than any other in England; some part of its success being no doubt due to the simple and efficacious measure taken by the monastery, which excommunicated every other school in the neighbourhood. The progress of the school received a check by the dissolution of the monastery, under Henry VIII.; but, in 1553, it was constituted a grammar school by a charter of Edward VI., and was removed from its old quarters to the lady chapel in the abbey, where it remained for over 300 years. This measure was by no means judicious, for not only did the school suffer greatly from want of space, but the lady chapel was so hacked about by the boys that its beautiful ornamental woodwork almost entirely disappeared. In 1870 the school was transferred to the old monastery gateway, where it still remains. Many famous men attended this school, amongst whom may be mentioned Nicholas Breakspear (the only English pope), Sir John Mandeville, Sir Francis Pemberton, the poet Cowley, and, it is believed, Sir Francis Bacon.

It would need too much space to mention the many curious customs and regulations that existed in the old school. There was, however, the extraordinary custom of electing annually from the scholars a "boy bishop," who travestied the duties of a real bishop, and sometimes even performed mock services. This school enjoys the unique privilege of being supported by a wine monopoly, for Queen Elizabeth, at the instigation of Sir Nicholas Bacon, granted it the famous "Wine Charter," by which no one in the borough could sell wine, except under a licence granted by the school. This monopoly still exists. The building now occupied by the school is also of considerable interest. It was originally the monastery gateway and prison, and was built by Abbot de la Mare, about 1396. After the dissolution it was used until 1870 as the borough prison. In all probability, the second printing-press in England was set up in this building. This press was worked by a St. Alban's monk, known as John Insomuch, who published three books in 1480—four years after the first book printed by Caxton.

J. WATSON.

THE OLDEST CHURCH IN ENGLAND.

DOWN among the trees and fields of Essex, not far from the small country town of Ongar, there stands in the middle of scenery as pretty as can be viewed in England, the oldest Christian church in our native land—if not in the whole world—which is still used for public worship. The main body of the church, which is naturally very small, was built about 861 A.D., when Ethelbert was King of England. It was after Ragnar Lodbrog—a very famous Norse Viking—had been tortured to death by the Northumbrians, that his two sons invaded, first, Northumbria, and then East Anglia. Edmund was King of the latter place; he was a man of the same stuff as Gordon and Livingstone. The King was captured and murdered, because he would not turn heathen. His body was then left to be buried by his friends, who carried it to the town now called Bury St. Edmunds. On the way thither they stopped in the midst of Epping Forest, and to shelter the body raised a chapel of split chestnut trees. This forms the greater part of the now existing church. The inside of the trees is, of course, polished, and looks very fine; but the outside and rounded portion presents a very curious spectacle to the viewer. The church has many modern improvements, but is well worth seeing, and I should recommend any readers of THE CAPTAIN who are cycling through Ongar to pay it a visit.

S. BISHOP.

SPECIAL PAGES

CONTRIBUTED BY READERS

The winner of One Year's Subscription to THE CAPTAIN this month is GORDON MCVOY, 17, Springfield Place, Leeds, whose carefully written paper on "Christmas Cards" is printed below.

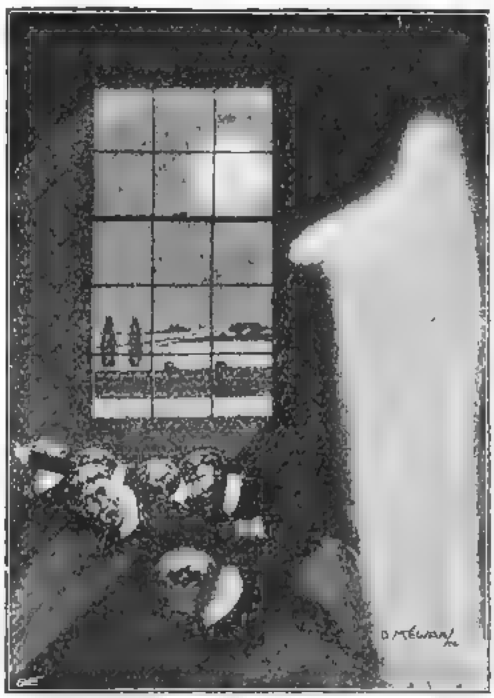
Your Own Christmas Cards.

How to Make Them by Photography.

COLLECT your best seascape, landscape, etc., negatives, and take prints off them on bromide paper. A few seconds' exposure to a gas light is quite sufficient for this.

When printed, develop the gauze as with plates, following the directions given with the paper. The image will begin to appear in a few seconds, and when it is dark enough, wash well and fix in a 20 per cent. solution of hypo. Fixation is complete in 15mins.; after which prints should be well washed for about half an hour, then allowed to dry, and mounted with starch paste on suitable mounts, when they are ready for framing. I have found the "leaf" and "stamp" processes the easiest and prettiest.

To make a stamp frame you must first get your stamps, which is easily done by writing for a packet to one of the many advertisers in THE CAPTAIN.



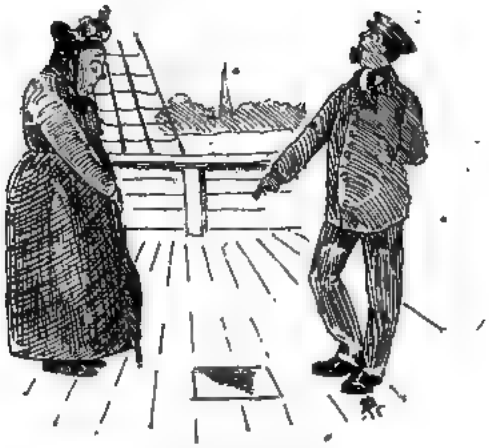
THE GHOST.
A Christmas Nightmare.
(*Drawn by D. McEwan.*)

Take a piece of wood, and from it cut four pieces 1¼in. wide and 1¼in. longer than the length and width of the mount. Cut all the corners at an angle of 45degs., so that when a long piece and a short piece are put together they will form a right angle. Put the frame together, cut four pieces of thin wood, 1¼in. square, and glue one piece to each corner.

Next, obtain a piece of cardboard, cut it exactly the size of the frame, mark 1⅜in. from each side, and draw a square exactly ⅛in. less than the mount. Cut this out, and glue it to the face of the wooden frame; when the photograph is put in there will be a rebate of ⅛in. all round, which will keep the glass and the photograph from falling out.

We have now to mount our stamps, which are to be fastened to the cardboard frame, and they may be put in any design you fancy. A Cape triangle in each corner looks rather pretty, only they are rather expensive for this work. When you have finished, leave your work to dry. A piece of glass, ⅛in. larger each way than the mount, is now required, and can be got at any glazier's for a penny or three halfpence. Place the glass in the frame, put the photograph on top of it, and paste a sheet of brown paper over the back to keep them in.

To make a "leaf" frame, the leaves must be gathered in summer and pressed in books. Make a wood and cardboard frame, as before, and arrange your leaves, etc., on it. A good background is made of moss, and in each corner you might glue an acorn in its cup, together with a few small oak leaves, arranged artistically



"ON THE VICTORY."

OLD SALT (pointing to brass memorial plate): "Here Nelson fell!"
OLD LADY (who has just slipped on said plate): "Poor man! I'm not surprised, I nearly fell there myself."

around. Down the sides more leaves or dried flowers may be glued.

These are only two examples; but with a little ingenuity you should be able to produce some very artistic work, and I am sure a photograph, say, of yourself, neatly framed, will form a much more pleasing present than an ordinary Christmas card.

GORDON MCVOY

"The landlord called for the rint to-day, Mickey."
"An' phat did ye say?"
"Oi told 'im the rint was in your coat, and Oi was sorry ye were out with it."

(By A. Inglis, S.P.R.A.)

Christmas.

The most pleasant season of the year, to my mind, is winter, and the most agreeable time of that season is Christmastide.

Christmas!

What pleasant thoughts does not that magic word conjure up in the heart of every Christian! What memories are not recalled to the mind of joyous by-gone Christmases and Happy New Years! When does one's heart warm more to one's fellow-creatures than at that hallowed season?

"I am sure," says the novelist of Christmas, 'that I have always thought of Christmas time, when it has come round—apart from its sacred name and origin, if anything belonging to it can be apart from that—as a good time; a kind, forgiving, charitable time; the only time I know of

FRENCH JOURNALISM.
(Drawn by Chas. F. Knowles.)

in the long calendar of the year when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really were fellow-passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys." Could any sentiments be finer, more simply or more clearly expressed than these?

Christmas is the season of the year when families cluster round their warm hearths, listening to the storm without, or watching the heavy falls of snow, and feel glad that they are not compelled to be abroad in such weather; when old men tell baleful stories of terrible storms that occurred when they were but children—storms the like of which have not been seen since! when parents tell horrible ghost tales to their quaking and trembling progeny, who look forward with fearful apprehension to the dread hour when they will be forced to retire to rest.

A SPANISH BULL-FIGHT—STOPPING THE BULL.
(*Sent by N. Y. Westall.*)

So let us all—good readers of THE CAPTAIN—raise our voices in praise of this merry season, and sing with the everlasting Wardle—

To the stout old wight, fair welcome to-night,
As King of the seasons all!

A Riddle.

Why is dynamite called by that name?
Because when a person's blown up with it, there's not enough of him left to "dine a mite on."

RONALD MASSEY.

[Put him under the pump for that.—O. F.]

The Bachelor's Complaint

BY V. WAKEFORD.

Returning home at close of day,
Who gently chides my long delay,
And by my side delights to stay?
Nobody.

Who puts me in the easy chair,
Sets out the room with neatest care,
And lays my slippers ready there?
Nobody.

Who regulates the cheerful fire,
And piles the blazing fuel higher,
And bids me draw my chair still nigher?
Nobody.

When plunged in deep and dire distress,
And anxious cares my heart oppress,
Who whispers hope of happiness?
Nobody.

When sickness racks my feeble frame,
And grief distracts my fevered brain,
Who sympathizes with my pain?
Nobody.

Then I'll resolve, so help me Fate!
To change at once the single state,
And will to Hymen's altar take
SOMEBODY.

Anagrams.

Prime Ministers during the present Reign.

Peril, beer, sort	Sir Robert Peel.
Ball, surry, do, is	Lord Salisbury.
O, number, rolled	Lord Melbourne.
Storm, pardon, ell	Lord Palmerston.
Bee, lorn, dread	Lord Aberdeen.
Stole, wed, nag	W. E. Gladstone.
Falcon, robed, slide	Lord Beaconsfield.
Dross, hull, lo, Erin	Lord John Russell.
Bread, forty, heel	The Earl of Derby.

P. V. W. BENNETT.

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS.

Scotch Thistle.—Go on doing little articles on subjects you can write about with *knowledge*. So many people write about things they are ignorant of, or only partially acquainted with. Get up your facts well, do not labour after long words, and keep your contributions bright and short. As to what "line" you ought to adopt, time alone can show you that. **E. M. Parkes.**—Your "poems" are carefully written, and that is the best I can say of them. Very few boys of fourteen can write poetry, you know. Try again when you are a bit taller. **Mabel Shepherd.**—Well, as you want to know, I will tell you: The "matter" with your poem, "Memory," is that it is very commonplace. That sort of thing has been written thousands of times. Try a brighter, lighter,

A FELLOW WHO MEANS TO JOIN "THE CAPTAIN" CLUB.

more original way of putting your thoughts into rhyme. **W. J. E. Baxter** (NEWCASTLE, NATAL).—Sorry cannot use your tales—the public is tired of war stories. To have THE CAPTAIN sent regularly will cost you 9s. per annum. **A. H. E. J.**—Your recipe for "ghost-making" is clever, but it might lead readers to play the fool with gas—a highly undesirable pastime. **Middy.**—"S.P.R.A." is the degree we give to those who win the "S. P." prize with an original drawing. The letters mean: "Special Pages Royal Academy." **Simon D. Peace, B. Burt,** and **S. W. Whateley** are thanked for "tent" articles. I hope to use one of them when space permits. **John Dunn.**—Too technical. Why not send a little essay on "Mill Hands"—what they earn, etc.? **E. George Boreham** (SYDNEY):—I hope to use your "Mirage." **D'Artagnan.**—I don't want "chestnuts." **S. H. Dewing.**—Your *pencil* sketch of the Nelson lectern will not "reproduce" clearly, I am afraid. **E. G. Morris.**—Many thanks, but I daresay you have already seen our supplementary article to "Cheap Photography." **Waterbottle.**—Glad you like Mr. Mayland's tale. As regards your request that I will "put your poem in the next number," I must ask you to remember that we go to press some time in advance. You must wait patiently. **Guy Brereton.**—The "two—ahem!—drawings" received. Why don't you—ahem!—take a little more pains?

Also contributions from: "Younis," T. E. Bonhote, Brer Rabbit, D. W. Harris, R. C. Tharp, A. D. Cooper, Alex. Lingford, C. Dare, John Read, Simon Peace, Edith Macgrigor, T. J. Southern, "A Wheelman," John Dunn, Percy Owen, M. J. Hart, A. E. Olley, F. G. Skinner, F. G. Bristow, Harold Barnshaw, "Checkmated," Greennalgh, A. S. Atkinson, H. Keyte, Percy A. Hanson.

[A large number of criticisms held over.]

"CAPTAIN" COMPETITIONS FOR DECEMBER.

NOTICE.—At the top of the first page the following particulars must be clearly written, thus:—

Competition No. ——, Class ——, Name ——,
Address ——, Age ——.

Letters to the Editor should not be sent with competitions.

We trust to your honour to send in unaided work.

GIRLS may compete.

You may enter for as many competitions as you like. Each "comp." must be sent in a separate envelope, or, when possible, on a post-card.

In every case the Editor's decision is final, and he cannot enter into correspondence with unsuccessful competitors.

Pages should be connected with paper-fasteners; not pins.

Address envelopes and post-cards as follows—Competition No. ——, Class ——, "THE CAPTAIN," 12, Burleigh Street, Strand, London.

All competitions should reach us by December 12th.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—Only write on one side of each sheet of paper. Only one competition must be put into an envelope. Anybody disregarding these rules, or failing to address envelopes properly, *will be disqualified.*

No. 1.—"**Omitted Words.**" Supply the omitted words in the following paragraph, which occurs on the first page of a story which will appear in the January number. THREE HALF-SOVEREIGNS will be the prizes. The dots represent the number of letters in the ten words left out. Copy the sentence neatly, and underline the words you supply in place of those omitted.

I was .... just fifteen years old then, and I am over .... now; but I remember every detail of what I am going to tell you as ..... it all happened ..... It was in the January of 1814, and for ... months the ..... —Austrians and Cossacks—had kept our little garrison ..... up in Salzburg, just like .... fox in its hole. It had been a .. .... year altogether, and now it was a very hard .....

Class I. Age limit: Twenty-two.
Class II. Age limit: Eighteen.
Class III. Age limit: Fourteen.

No. 2.—"**A Picture of Books.**"—Draw a pile of books, in pen or pencil. The prizes will be THREE FULL SETS OF DRAWING MATERIALS.

Class I. ... ... Age limit: Twenty-one.
Class II. ... ... Age limit: Sixteen.
Class III. ... ... Age limit: Twelve.

No. 3.—"**Villain in Fiction.**"—Who is the greatest villain you have ever read about in fiction? Give a short account of him, and don't exceed 400 words. The three prizes will be anything out of THE CAPTAIN advertisements up to the value of 7s. 6d.

Class I. ... ... Age limit: Twenty-five.
Class II. ... ... Age limit: Twenty.
Class III. ... ... Age limit: Sixteen.

No. 4.—"**Map of Spain and Portugal.**" The prizes will be three articles out of our advertisement pages up to the value of 7s. 6d.

Class I. ... ... Age limit: Twenty-two.
Class II. ... ... Age limit: Eighteen.
Class III. ... ... Age limit: Fourteen.

No. 5.—"**Spelling Mistakes.**"—ONE GUINEA will be presented to the reader who sends in the most complete list of spelling mistakes which occur in this number of THE CAPTAIN, from cover to cover, including advertisements. ("The Chase of Bird" is excepted.)

One age limit ... ... Eighteen.

No. 6.—"**For Athletes.**"—A prize of HALF A GUINEA will be awarded to the athlete who sends in the best essay (not exceeding 400 words) on the subject of "My Favourite Pastime."

No age limit.

NOTE.—As a number of Competitors seem hazy on this point, let them understand that a Competitor may enter for (say) an age limit 25 comp., so long as he has not actually turned 26. The same rule applies to all the other age limits.

12, BURLEIGH STREET,
STRAND, LONDON.

A Happy Christmas to Everybody—to every boy reader, to every girl reader, to every reader at home, abroad, and afloat. Tommy Atkins, your hand! Yours, too, Jack Tar! And a right happy Christmas to every reader in South Africa who, this time last year, was a refugee and homeless; but now, I trust, back again under the dear old roof-tree. This 1900 has been a cruel year, and the century's death has been a hard one. But peace is at hand, and the sun is at length shining through the war-clouds.

Christmas Presents.—There is a right and a wrong way, at Christmas time, of giving presents. Some people seem to think that a present will not be appreciated unless it is rather an expensive one, with a lot of silver or gold electro-plating about it. Such is many a person's weak estimate of human nature that he will spend far more than he can afford in order to give some glittering object to somebody who would be content with a simple article of half the other's value. Now, the best sort of present to give, is the present that is *thought out*. It is because people do not "think out" presents that couples about to be married very often receive ten cruet-stands and fifteen sets of fish knives. The best thought-out wedding present I have seen lately was a very easy reading-chair, given to a bride who had a slight weakness of the spine. It was given to her by an old lover.

Think your presents out. Think what your friends and relatives want. Of course I know that among the majority of young people pocket-money is not very plentiful, so that if you want to give pater something he is much in need of, such as a new desk, or mater something she very much wants, such as a standard lamp, *club together*. Give one good present among you—something well thought out, and useful and lasting. You cannot, I know, give presents to everybody; don't go and ruin yourself over it. When you cannot afford to give a present, send a nice card—not "any old thing" left over from last year, but a good one and an appropriate one. Don't send a picture of niggers dancing to your godmother; on the other hand, don't give your school-boy cousin a picture of angels hovering round the spire of a village church.

Christmas Letters.—It is a common thing to hear people say, "I *hate* letter-writing!" and to be sure it is a bit of a fag sometimes, and it is not much good writing a letter if you are going to fill it up with a lot of washy twaddle about the weather and the health of the parish clerk. I know people who can write eight pages and not express one complete thought therein, so hurriedly and carelessly do they scribble. Much better write two pages and think over them and try and say something which will really interest the person you are writing to. Fag or no fag, it is your duty to write a certain number of letters. Very often a letter that costs you but very little trouble to write gives very much pleasure to the recipient. At Christmas-time you should make an effort to write to as many friends and relatives as you can, just to let them know you are alive, and especially should you write to relatives abroad. Think what pleasure it gives that brother of yours, who is a mounted policeman in Zululand, to receive even the most commonplace scrawl; he will carry it about and read it over and over again! Think of the satisfaction it gives him, not merely to receive letters from those at home, but to have the knowledge that he is "remembered"!

Write, then, to all who would like to hear from you, and think over what you say; but don't put down any "rot" that ripples off the end of your pen—*think!* Such letters, sent in a kindly spirit, will help you to keep your friends, and nobody can afford to lose friends in this unfriendly world.

Our Christmas Cover.—You will see on the cover Mr. Tom Browne has drawn for this number that the English boy is represented sitting amongst "the nations." Just above the little nigger stands a Chinese boy, between whom and the young Spaniard is a Hindoo urchin. Clambering over the Old Fag and his volumes, we come to a group of six—the three at the top representing a German (by the O.F.'s elbow), a Laplander, and a Turk; while a Hollander, a Russian, and, finally, a French boy (peeping over the English boy's shoulder) complete the group. Note what a little the French boy wears round his legs, and what a lot the Dutch boy does. Mr. Tom Browne is a great traveller, and has studied most of these boys "from life."

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

C. E. Leigh-Trowell.—I have read your letter with much interest, and think you are to be highly commended for the courageous fight you have made single-handed. I cannot undertake to get posts for my readers, and I must tell you that private secretaryships are exceedingly hard to obtain. Fast shorthand is an absolute necessity. However, as you understand motor-car driving, you may, perhaps, drop into something that another young fellow might miss. I should advise you—if you can afford it—to advertise in papers like the *Standard* and the *Times*, mentioning that you are well-educated, and that you understand the driving of motor-cars. Someone in need of a private secretary with your abilities might see it. Keep your eye on the advertisement columns of such papers.

H. G. Braybrooke.—I am very glad to see that you take such a real interest in your friend's welfare. You want to know a really good book to give him? Well, I will tell you one. I think about the best book he can read, in his present state of mind, is "My Friend Smith," by the late Talbot Baines Reed. It is published by the Religious Tract Society, 56, Paternoster Row, E.C., and costs, I think, 5s. or 3s. 6d., but you can get it through a local bookseller. This describes some of the temptations and hardships young men have to go through in London, and how any fellow can keep straight by making up his mind to be a man and do so. All T. B. Reed's books are good in this way. I should advise you to get a list of them.

Ross (Dundee) seems to be an athletic sort of cuss. He plays football, cricket, and golf, and fills in spare time with cycling, fishing, and boxing. He plays golf between 5 a.m. and 9 a.m., when he begins work at his desk for the day. He fishes on Saturday afternoons during the season, and cycles on summer evenings. Football he plays steadily all the winter. He wants to know what I am like in appearance; I can only refer him to Mr. Hassall's faithful portrait of me at the top of this department.

F. and C. R. (Perth, Australia).—Getting up in the morning is merely a matter of will. You wake; it is time to get up; you get up. If you lie and luxuriate in the warmth of your bed you merely soften your muscles and enervate your constitution. Directly you are out of bed, give your face a good swilling in cold water. This will effectually drive all traces of slumber out of you. Afterwards you can proceed to take your tub, or whatever you take every morning in the wash-and-scrub line.

S. S. O. P.—Kick them! If they continue after that send me a stamped addressed envelope, and I will tell you what to do. It would *not* be "sneaking" if you reported them to the Captain of your school. Blackguards of this sort ought to be horse-whipped, and I wish the Captain of every school had the moral courage to take a strong line with them, and stamp out this evil.

St. Thomas' College Magazine (Ceylon).—I have received copies of this for review. It seems to be well done on the whole, but I should like to draw the editor's attention to the fact that a whole page of Captain paragraphs are "borrowed" without any acknowledgment as to the source from which they were obtained.

"Ingm Kd Osuntw."—You are indeed a reader worth having. Mr. Swainson is engaged on another story for The Captain. You can make your wrists and shoulders bigger by plenty of dumb-bell exercise. Read Mr. Fry's "Answers to Correspondents" carefully, and you will pick up a lot of hints.

C. H. B. and C. I. V.—Tortoises are excellent things for one's garden. You can obtain them from Summer's Naturalist Stores, Oxford Street, W. They should be fed on insects and greenstuff. Sink a large flat vessel level with the ground, and fill with water, so that they can wander in and out of it at will.

Thirsty.—(1) There is, I believe, a complete edition of Stevenson's works, but "The Suicide Club" is omitted, and quite right too. You can get particulars from your own bookseller, or from Messrs. A. & F. Denny, 107, Strand, London. Send stamped envelope. (2) Don't smoke.

Charley Fillan.—I am glad to hear you are going to have The Captain sent to you at Dominica. We have already a large number of readers in the West Indies, but I am very pleased to hear that you intend to push the circulation out there as much as possible. *Bon voyage!*

A. H. Grigsby.—Do you think Mr. Phil May has nothing else to do but tell "would-be" artists how to draw? Read our advice in "Special Pages"—and work, work, work, if ever you hope to get any pay, pay, pay for your pictures.

H. G. Callaway.—I don't think writing poetry does a fellow any harm so long as he doesn't spend too much time over it. Bung your poems in as much as ever you like, but don't be discouraged if they do not always appear.

Questioner.—Some authors "pay" publishers to produce their books, but it is a bad system. If a book is really worth publishing a publisher will take the entire responsibility, and the author need not risk a penny.

T. Jager.—I don't suppose you can get much for your weekly parts, especially as the series is not complete. If you think it worth your while you

might put a short advertisement in the *Exchange and Mart*.

"**Du Rennes.**"—"A Junior Course of Practical Chemistry" will give you a very good idea of the prices of apparatus, etc., required. You can obtain it from Messrs. A. & F. Denny, 107, Strand, W.C.

Beetle.—I am sorry I can't grant the request of so staunch a supporter. Go on competing—say for the "Special Pages" prize—and time may bring you victory—and THE CAPTAIN for a year, free.

Gubbins Minor (DUNDEE) promises to "fag against all bad literature" if I will make him an official representative of THE CAPTAIN at Dundee. Certainly I will, on these terms.

J. K. T. (ALL SAINTS' GRAMMAR SCHOOL, MELBOURNE).—Glad THE CAPTAIN is so appreciated at your place. I believe we are sending a cricket team over to you in October, 1901.

Jan Ridd.—"People of the Mist," by H. Rider Haggard, is published by Longmans Green & Co., price 3s. 6d. Thanks for outline of Latin book. Very quaint, I'm sure.

"**Tommy Atkins.**"—Has your Yorkshire terrier got mange or eczema? His hair ought not to come off. Vaseline is about as good as anything to make it grow again.

Old Sedberghian (GENEVA).—(1) I didn't suppose much cricket was played in Switzerland. Your information settles the point. (2) No more war poems, thanks.

A. H. Patten.—Write a polite letter to the person whose autograph you wish to have, and enclose a stamped addressed envelope.

F. G. Sampson.—Many thanks, but I do not care about reproducing the photograph of tombstone. **Sambo Soulis.**—Your suggestions *re* "badge" to hand. I thank you for your kindly reference to my "honourable skull." **Interested Reader.**—I do not know who edited the *Ladysmith Lyre*. One of the war correspondents, I expect. **Sydneian.**—Well done on the whole. Editorial rather "solid." More "notes" would lighten the magazine. The type throughout is too small. **B. C. S.** (NEW BRUNSWICK).—By all means send photograph. 4ins. by 5ins. will be large enough. **J. F. H.**—I have read your long letter with interest. I don't think it at all "cheeky." I am giving it careful consideration. **E. Fry.**—I advise you to obtain the "Book of British Hawkmoths," price 8s. 9d., post free, from L. Upcott Gill, 170, Strand, W.C. **Cyril Berningham.**—See "Cabinet Making for Amateurs," price 2s. 9d., post free, from L. Upcott Gill, as above. **E. M. P.**—"Butterfly and Moth Collecting," price 1s. 2d., post free, from L. Upcott Gill (as above) will tell you everything you want to know. "**Nesolo.**"—The books you mention should be read in the following order: "The Three Musketeers," "Twenty Years After," "Vicomte de Bragelonne." **W. E Pearce.**—See reply to "F. B." in "Editorial" for May, 1900. **The Baby.**—You cannot do better than purchase a book called "Freshwater Aquaria," by the Rev. G. C. Bateman, A.K.C. It is published by L. Upcott Gill, 170, Strand, London, W.C.; and the price is 3s. 10d., post free. "**Sirdar.**"—I regret I cannot use your article on "Caves." Many thanks. **10 Months' Readers.**—(1) Don't smoke at all if you want to make old bones; (2) Yes, our advertisements may be relied on as genuine. **J. S. Potts** made a mistake in "My Walk to School" (Sept. "S. P."). The Bishop of Southwark lives on the top of Morden Hill, and not the Bishop of Rochester, as he stated. **Theophilus Coulson Shadbrooke.**—No, I do not think I am your man, Mr. Shadbrooke. How small a boy called Jack Jones must feel when he sees his name written under yours. **Stop Watch.**—No, I don't count you a foreign reader. **Herbert Hanson.**—I think I have answered your question in "Special Pages." Kind regards to family. **Jamaican.**—You can reckon on growing till you're twenty-five. There's hope for you! Yes, smoking is bad—don't! **Elsilrac.**—Will adopt your suggestion if I can see my way to. Best Christmas wishes to your "regiment of earnest advertisers." **Violet Reed and Hilda Handley.**—Delighted to hear from you. I cannot put readers in communication with each other. **Gryps.**—Poor girl—bear up! Although you are not as strong as the average boy, and can't expect to be, you are probably a good deal prettier, and isn't *that* something? **Bobs.**—Yes, keep your Kruger coins; like port wine, their value will increase with advancing years. **Hakopa** (Aramoho).—Suggestions noted. Yes, I'm the unworthy person you mention. Now then, who's next? **W. Bligh.**—I cannot break my rule by giving you any further information about the results of competitions other than that which you will find published in the magazine. **May L. A. M.** informs "Perplexed" that "She built herself an everlasting name" comes from Tennyson's "Lady Godiva." **Egyptus.**—You will find all you want to know about Cleopatra's Needle in any encyclopædia. **B. C. J.** For information *re* weight of dumb-bells, look up Mr. Fry's "Answers to Correspondents." **Herr Venanzi.**—Isn't it bad luck to kill a spider? I do not know how you can get rid of them, except by regular brooming. Ask an old housewife. I do *not* receive visitors at the office. **A Reader** says, in answer to that query about "midges," that a little turpentine will keep all midges away. This is best admixed with glycerine jelly, as it is then more pleasant to apply. **Tom Clarke.**—I do not think any ice skating rink remains open all the year round, though there are several in London which are open all the winter through. **L. J. R. Cripps.**—The feature was supported by so few readers that we decided to discontinue it. **R. C. Howlden.**—Your reply to Mr. Kirby must wait till January, as this number is "full up, inside and out."

I beg to acknowledge: Old Crauleighans football card, Birmingham "Ideal Club" winter programme, Llandovery School football card, "Calendar Events" from F. Skinner, F. Grigsby, Harold Smith, and others.

Letters also received from: "A Boy's Sister," "Cardiffian," R. Wood, K. F. (suggestion for badge), G. H. Cox (with drawing of "O.F."), C. I. Jordan, M. Barrett, Dorothy Evans, "A Bluecoat Boy," "Littéraires," B. Gray, "Cyclop," "Sapiens," "Socrates," Hedley Fielding, "Neptune," Sidney Mead, Leonard Watson, Short, and many others.

Some of these correspondents will be answered next month.

THE OLD FAG.

Results of October Competitions.

No. I.—"Best Initial Letters or Tailpieces."

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty-five.)

WINNER OF SET OF DRAWING MATERIALS: ROBERT YOUSTON, 64, Ashley Terrace, Edinburgh.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Eleanor K Dowding, C. L. Gibbs, Charles F. Knowles, W. E. G. Longmore, H. Holliday.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Twenty.)

WINNER OF SET OF DRAWING MATERIALS: T. A. CHAPLIN, 50, High Street, Winchester.

HONOURABLE MENTION: S. C Bennet, M E. Cock, A. J. Judd, Dorothy C. Hudson, J D. Hughes, Lawrence Furniss H Stampfly, D. Newill, R. Cohen, D. M. Muir, J. P. Grandidier Fred Carter, Sybil Haines, G. Monks.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Sixteen.)

WINNER OF SET OF DRAWING MATERIALS: FRED. INESTER, 30, Lutton Place, Edinburgh.

HONOURABLE MENTION: David Pryde, Tom Street, H. W. Chance, Alan Leslie, Victor Glenmore, J. A. Ramsay, G. W. Mason, H. Lendon, G. H. Cox, Winifred Hardy, Katherine Richardson, H. Flyters, A. S. Arkinson, Fred. Thompson, W. Fenning.

No. II.—"My Favourite Monarch in English History."

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty-one.)

WINNER OF BLOTTING CASE: G. R. DAY, Haileybury College, Hertford.

CONSOLATION PRIZES have been awarded to DOROTHY R. MORRIS, 56, Ranelagh Road, Ealing, and HAROLD BOAG, 219, Cardigan Terrace, Gateshead-on-Tyne.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Edward Woodward, Helen Colt, William Armstrong, Hettie Ormiston, J. H. Jones, R. Gale.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Sixteen.)

WINNER OF BLOTTING CASE: MABEL ASPINALL, Holworthy, N Devon.

CONSOLATION PRIZES have been awarded to: HARRY MULLETT, 308, Abbey Road, Barrow-in-Furness, Lancs.; and URSULA SNOWDEN, Riseby Hall, South Stainley, Leeds.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Mary Milton, William Vennard, G. C. Thomson, Hugh E. Muir, Dorothy Piggott, A. F. Webster, Myra Hunt.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Twelve.)

WINNER OF BLOTTING CASE: O. F BROWN, 51, Nassington Road, Hampstead.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE has been awarded to: KEITH MILLER, 42, St. Swithin Street, Aberdeen, Scotland.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Gladys Leigh, Nelly Leigh Arthur Smith.

No. III.—"From London to Sydney."

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty.)

WINNER OF 7s.: WILLIAM LOGAN, c/o Raeburn, 15, Spottiswoode Street, Edinburgh.

HONOURABLE MENTION: H. G. Lee, M. E. Cock, F. Leatham, A. W. Dicks, Mary Morcton, R. Gale, R. Horwell.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Sixteen.)

WINNER OF 7s.: FREDERICK INESTER, 30, Lutton Place, Edinburgh.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Harold Somerville, A. T. Walsh, Hilda Gilling, Gladys M. Burnham.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Twelve.)

WINNER OF 7s.: JAMES HAMILTON, 2, Lauriston Gardens, Edinburgh.

HONOURABLE MENTION: R. J Stevenson, F. Milton, J. W. Taylor, Lois Heaton, R. J. Howse.

No. IV.—"The Field of Fair Renown."

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty-three.)

WINNER OF PRIZE: WILLIAM MELLOR, 54, Southbank Road, Southport, Lancs.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Amy B. Smith, Dorothy Johnson, Fannie E. Baxter, Elsie Simmons.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Nineteen.)

WINNER OF PRIZE: ELSIE LONG, 15, The Causeway, Horsham, Sussex.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE has been awarded to: CHARLES J. B. MASEFIELD, "Rosehill," Cheadle, Staffs.

HONOURABLE MENTION: John R. Edgar, Roy Carmichael, W. T. Paterson, P. T. Lister, Lilian Ormiston, John Ernest Matthews.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Fifteen.)

WINNER OF PRIZE: INGA S. BELL, 9, Marchmont Terrace, Glasgow.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE has been awarded to: ERICA OLIVER, 16, De Parys Avenue, Bedford.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Charles W. Morrow, R. H Southern, F. E. Mann, Alice George, J. S. Paterson, E. Haward, F. G. Skinner, Rose Gibson.

No. V.—"Poem on Christmas." (Age limit: Twenty-five.)

WINNER OF 10s. 6d.: LILIAN M. SNOW, Camden Rise, Chislehurst, Kent.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Hettie Ormiston, Percy Gaskin, Sadie Harbison, C Doncaster, E. M. B. Ratcliff.

No. VI.—"Books that have Influenced me."

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty-five.)

WINNER OF "PELICAN" FOUNTAIN PEN: HARRY B. PARKER, 13, Wesley Road, Armley, Leeds.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE has been awarded to: CYP. DARE, 24, Paigeton Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham.

HONOURABLE MENTION: W. C Weedon, D. B. Morris, Lawson Duxbury, Charles Rogers, Cyril Burrage, L Rawling, Frank Haslam.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Twenty.)

WINNER OF "PELICAN" FOUNTAIN PEN: CHARLES MURRAY, c/o Mr. Elder, 18, Downfield Place, Edinburgh.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE has been awarded to: WILLIAM VAUGHAN, "Durban," Old Road West, Gravesend.

HONOURABLE MENTION: George C. Thomson, Annie Willis, William Kent, J. E. Matthews.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Sixteen.)

WINNER OF "PELICAN" FOUNTAIN PEN: HUMPHREY PROSSER, Cwmpare, Treorchy, R.S.O.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE has been awarded to: ELSIE SIMMONS, Brenzett, Banister Road, Southampton.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Arthur Saxton, Constance Bellhouse.

Winners of Consolation Prizes are requested to inform the Editor which they would prefer—a volume of the "Captain," "Strand," or "Wide World."

OUR JANUARY NUMBER

will contain **ACTON'S CHRISTMAS** *by Fred Swainson (this having arrived too late for insertion in the Christmas Number); also,* **A GREYHOUSE TALE** *by R. S. Warren Bell, an* **ATHLETIC ARTICLE** *by C. B. Fry, second half of* **THE CHINESE PUBLIC SCHOOL-BOY** *(crowded out of this number, poor mutilated chap!),* **A WAR STORY** *by David Ker,* **A HUNDRED YEARS OF TRAVELLING** *by J. A. Kay,* **A "BUSH" STORY** *by J. Patrick, and many other interesting features.*

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2/-, 3/-, 5/-, & 5/6 the set.

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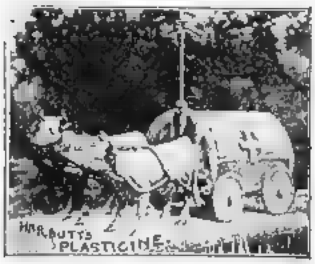

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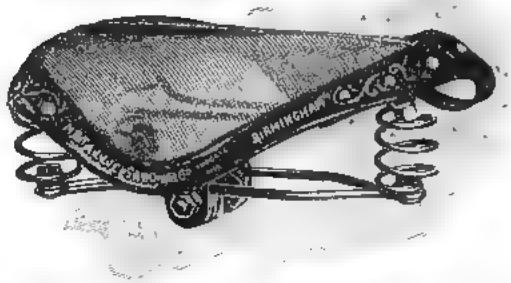

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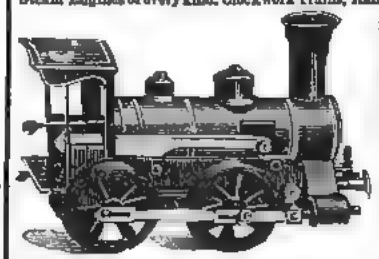

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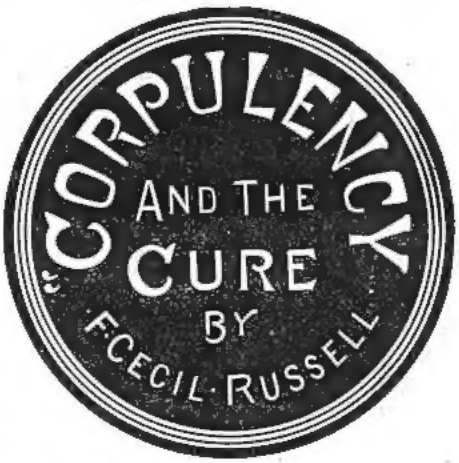

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